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MOVING WITH THE TIMES

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BENGALURU
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Households struggle to return to normalcy

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Campaign ends, stage set for key fights tomorrow

49 constituencies, including Amethi and Rae Bareli, will vote on May 20; contestants include Rahul Gandhi, Smrti Irani, Rajnath Singh and Omar Abdullah; fate of five Union Ministers at stake

Sreeparna Chakrabarty
NEW DELHI

Big battle: Union Home Minister and BJP leader Amit Shah and Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra campaign for their respective party candidates in Amethi on Saturday. PTI, ANI

Campaigning for the fifth phase of the Lok Sabha election ended on Saturday.

A total of 49 seats, including the high-profile constituencies of Amethi and Rae Bareli, will vote in this phase on May 20.

The campaigning saw high-pitched rhetoric by the BJP and the INDIA bloc. While Prime Minister Narendra Modi attacked the Congress claiming that the UPA government had wanted to allocate 15% of the Budget to Muslims, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge widened the gamut of poll guarantees of his party when he promised 10 kg of free foodgrains to the poor.

Mr. Modi, while campaigning in Uttar Pradesh on Friday, said the Congress and the Samajwadi Party would run a bulldozer over the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, if elected to power, prompting the Congress to complain to the Election Commission on Saturday.

Of the 49 seats going to the polls on Monday, the BJP won 32 in 2019, while the Congress got only Rae Bareli. This time, the BJP is contesting 40 seats while the Congress has limited itself to just 18 seats, leaving the rest to its allies.

For this phase, 695 candidates, including 82 women, are in the fray. Some of the star candidates include the Congress's Rahul Gandhi from Rae Bareli, the BJP's Smrti Irani from Amethi, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh from Lucknow, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal from Mumbai North, Omar Abdullah from Baramulla and the RJD's Rohini Acharya from Saran in Bihar.

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Arrest warrant against Prajwal Revanna issued

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

An arrest warrant was issued on Saturday against "absconding" MP for Hassan Prajwal Revanna in a rape case registered against him. He faces three such cases and this is the first such warrant issued against him.

First step

This is said to be the first step towards seeking the cancellation of his passport, which will force him to return home.

The Special Court for Elected Representatives issued the warrant on a plea on Saturday by the Special Investigation Team (SIT).

Accused of multiple instances of sexual abuse, Mr. Prajwal Revanna flew out of the country to Germany in the wee hours of April 27.

CONTINUED ON
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An address in India, minted at post office

Decisive day: Pakistani Hindus wait for their turn to be interviewed at a post office in New Delhi on Saturday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

On a hot Saturday morning, plastic chairs have been lined up in the corner of a big hall at the Indraprastha post office in central Delhi. Around a dozen Pakistani Hindus, all related to each other, soon occupy them and await their turn for an interview with government officials in the office of the Senior Postmaster.

An official emerges from the room, matches the names on a bunch of files in his possession and calls them inside individually.

They have applied for citizenship under the newly implemented Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019.

Kanwar Lal came to India on a pilgrimage visa with his wife and children in June 2014. After the CAA Rules were notified on March 11, he applied online for citizenship by naturalisation on April 27. Last week, he got an SMS to reach the Indraprastha post office on Saturday at 11 a.m.

CONTINUED ON
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Centrum
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Do you know a full plate may not mean full nutrition?

100% VEGETARIAN

Choose Centrum
World's #1 Multivitamin**,
which has essential vitamins & minerals, customized as per daily RDA of every member of your family.

Today, you might be eating a plate full of food, but that may not contain the right mix or right quantity of vitamins, minerals & other nutrients. And to lead a healthy life, getting both right is vital.

To understand this completely, it's important to ***KNOW YOUR RDA.*** (Recommended Dietary Allowance)

RDA, in simple words, is daily requirement of nutrients like vitamins and minerals that our body needs to stay healthy. RDA varies basis age, gender & other factors.

While some vitamins and minerals are readily available in our diet, others may not be. The amount of food needed to fulfill one's RDA of multiple vitamins & minerals may be difficult to consume everyday.#

Let's talk about daily RDA of some vitamins & minerals, taking example of women.

Daily RDA requirements*

Calcium	3.3 cups of milk (825 ml)
Iron	425 g of Black Raisins
Vitamin A	100 g of Carrots
Vitamin B 12	265 g of milk powder
Vitamin C	25 g of Amla
Vitamin D	73 g of Mushrooms
Vitamin E	40 g of Almonds
Zinc	490 g of Red Rajmah

VITAMINS & MINERALS
Supports overall health

VITAMIN B COMPLEX
Supports Energy

VITAMIN D
Supports Strong bones

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*Approx. calculated food equivalence values considering ICMR NIN 2020 RDA in Women (sedentary activity). #Globaldietarydatabase.org/data-download, accessed 10th May'24.
**Source: Nicholas Hall's Global CHC database, DB6 Q1'23. Creative Visualization. PM-IN-CNT-23-00048.

A BG-BGE

Dust to dust: Soil and stone removed from the lignite mine is piled high. It can be used to refill the mines after treatment to ensure sustainability.

Digging deep: Layers of soil and stone, known as overburden, being removed in search of lignite deposits.

Dunes of waste: An overburden dumpsite where environment-friendly reclamation is being planned.

Coal hunt: Specialised mining equipment, the bucket wheel excavator, being operated at a coal mine in Neyveli.

Staying power

Coal and lignite have been the mainstay of energy security in the country but with the push to transition to renewable energy, public sector undertakings are not far behind

B. Jothi Ramalingam
jothi.b@thehindu.co.in

Tamil Nadu is the largest producer of lignite in the country. According to statistics released by the Union Ministry of Coal for 2022-23, Tamil Nadu accounted for 49.97% of the production, followed by Gujarat at 27.37% ,and Rajasthan at 22.67%.

NLC India Ltd., headquartered at Neyveli in Tamil Nadu, contributes a lion's share of lignite production. The public sector undertaking (PSU) lists, as among its performance highlights, the all-time high coal and lignite production of 36.32 tonnes in 2023-24 across the country.

In Tamil Nadu, the NLCIL's installed power generation capacity is 4,390 MW of thermal projects and 1,411 MW of renewable energy projects. Officials said some challenges in land acquisition had been overcome and that lignite production would be ramped up. However, much emphasis is also being laid on capacity addition through renewable energy sources.

"Sustainability has been in all our actions, since inception," said Prasanna Kumar Motupalli, chairman and managing director, NLCIL. It was the first Central PSU to achieve 1 GW renewable energy capacity in India. The company has set as its target an installed capacity of 17.1 GW, including 6 GW renewable capacity, by 2030.

The environmental consequences of mining can be harsh. Green initiatives are being undertaken for the sustainable end use of land resources but more needs to be done on this aspect. At present, the focus is on scientific reclamation of mined lands. Going forward, there will be efforts to establish community-centric land uses such as restored forests and eco-parks, says the foreword to a report on "Greening Initiatives in Coal and Lignite PSUs" brought out by the Ministry of Coal.

In open cast mines, coal can be extracted only after removing layers of soil and stones. This soil and stone is known as overburden. This "overburden" is removed and treated for other uses in order to reduce the environmental impact of mining. Afforestation is another initiative that has been undertaken in some areas.

Non-stop action: Specialised mining equipment excavating lignite.

From Page One

Arrest warrant issued against Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna

A Blue Corner notice against him issued by Interpol to its 196-member countries seeking his current location has not got any response yet.

Across Europe

Meanwhile, according to intelligence sources he has been travelling across Europe where his diplomatic passport, as an Indian MP, gets him any entry without a visa. Unconfirmed reports said he had been to Hungary, Austria, England, and Dubai. While leaving for Germany on April 27, he had booked a return ticket to Bengaluru on May 15, which he recently cancelled at the last minute. Sources said he was unlikely to return before the declaration of the Lok Sabha election results.

Now that an arrest warrant has been issued against Mr. Prajwal Revanna, SIT will likely seek cancellation of his passport shortly. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah had written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on May 1, seeking his intervention in cancelling Mr. Prajwal Revanna's diplomatic passport, so that he is forced to return home and face the legal process. However, his passport has not been revoked till now.

The warrant was issued in a case registered against him in Holenarsipur Town Police Station on April 28. Based on a complaint by a former domestic help at his father H.D. Revanna's household, both Mr. Prajwal Revanna and Mr. H.D. Revanna were booked for sexual harassment.

However, later, based on the victim's statement before the magistrate, Mr. Prajwal Revanna was booked for rape even as Mr. H.D. Revanna continues to face only sexual harassment charges in the case. The special court has reserved its order in the anticipatory bail plea of Mr. H.D. Revanna in the case for Monday.

INBRIEF

Passenger held for claiming to have bomb in bag at airport

The KIA police arrested a 50-year-old businessman for allegedly creating panic at the airport by claiming to have a bomb in his bag at the departure terminal on Thursday.

The accused Rajesh Kumar Beniwal, 50, from Hissar, Haryana had come to Bengaluru to meet friends and was heading to Pune. While getting his bag checked, Beniwal, who was accompanied by his friends, started shouting, "There is a bomb in my bag." Beniwal later told the security officials that he was joking and wanted to check their alertness. The police arrested Beniwal under public mischief and released him later on station bail after recording his statement for further investigation.

International Nurses Day celebrated

The Bureau of Indian Standards, Bangalore Branch Office, on Thursday, organised an Educational utilisation of standards programme for the students of the Department of Mental Health Nursing, Smt. Nagarathnamma College of Nursing, Bangalore (Acharya Institute), on the occasion of International Nurses Day.

Elder brother kills 12-year-old after row over mobile phone

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Sarjapur police on Saturday arrested an 18-year-old boy for allegedly killing his 12-year-old brother following a trivial row over a mobile phone on Wednesday (May 18).

The deceased, Pranesh, son of Basavaraju and Chennamma, had come to visit his parents during his vacations. He was in the labour shed while his parents and elder brother went out for construction work.

On Wednesday evening, Pranesh was found dead with a head injury at the eucalyptus grove behind the shed. Based on a complaint by Basavaraju, the police registered a case of murder and took Shivakumar, the victim's elder brother, into custody for questioning.

According to the police, Shivakumar was the last person who had seen his brother alive, and he was the first to see the dead body in the groove. Detailed questioning led Shivakumar to confess to the crime, said the police.

According to him, Pranesh used to take his mobile phone and start playing games, never returning it. Shivakumar used to fight with Pranesh often to get his phone back.

On Wednesday, when Shivakumar came home to have lunch while his parents were at the construction site, Pranesh picked up his phone and started playing with it.

Shivakumar demanded his phone back, but Pranesh did not return it. Enraged by this, Shivakumar allegedly picked up a handheld hammer and hit Pranesh.

A blow caused Pranesh to collapse on the ground and breath his last. Scared, Shivakumar dragged his body into the backyard of the labour shed, dumped it and returned home to clean up the area.

Students hit as no talent search exam is conducted for three years

The exam was scheduled and postponed in 2021, after many students had even paid the fees, because of the pandemic. NCERT has not been calling for applications since then

Jayanth R.
BENGALURU

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), which used to conduct the National Talent Search Examination (NTSE), a national scholarship exam for class 10 students annually, has not done so since 2021. Many academically talented poor students pin their hopes on the NTSE monthly scholarship as it continues till they complete their studies.

The exam was scheduled and postponed in 2021, after many students had even paid the fees, due to the pandemic. NCERT has not been seeking applications since then.

"I applied for NTSE in 2021 when I was in class 10, and now I am doing my undergraduate studies, but the exam hasn't been held till now, even as the country has passed over the pandemic crisis and all other national exams are being held regularly," said Rajesh S., a student.

Students writing the NTSE exam in Mangaluru. FILE PHOTO

How exams are held

The NTSE exam has two stages. The State-level examination (Stage 1), held by the Department of State Educational Research and Training (DSERT), is divided into two parts: part 1 is the mental aptitude test, and part 2 is the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). The national-level examination (Stage 2), held by NCERT, is conducted for candidates who qualify in the Stage 1 examination. The candidates who pass NTSE will get a scholarship of ₹1,250 per month up to completion of class 12 and ₹2,000 a month in undergraduate and postgraduate courses. An NTSE scholar also gets a scholarship for a Ph.D. as per the University Grant Commission norms.

Apart from scholarships, NTSE scholars have other facilities. Several prestigious institutes reserve seats for NTSE scholars, who are inducted without entrance tests. They are also perceived to have an edge when studying in foreign universities.

Pandemic

The last time NCERT sought applications for NTSE was in 2021, and the exam was scheduled to be held on December 15, 2021. However, due to the second wave of the pandemic, it was temporarily postponed and has not been held since.

Sumangala V., Director, DSERT, said they had not received any information from NCERT about holding NTSE for three years now. However, she added that on behalf of the State government, they were conducting the National Means cum-Merit Scholarship Scheme (NMMSS) exam and providing scholarships to talented students of the State.

EP career counselling in Tumakuru today

The Hindu EducationPlus Career Counselling 2024

Place	Date	Venue	Address
Tumakuru	19/05/2024	Birla Auditorium	Siddaganga Institute of Technology, Tumakuru
Kalaburagi	19/05/2024	Poojya Doddappa Appa Sabha Bhavan	Poojay Doddappa Appa Sabha Bhavan, Sharana Basava University, Kalaburagi

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The 22nd edition of The Hindu Education Plus Career Counselling 2024 will be organised in Kalaburagi and Tumakuru on Sunday.

The event will provide guidance on the UPSC exam, CET counselling, and NEET Counselling from the Karnataka Examination Authority while also providing career guidance on courses in Arts, Science, Commerce, Law, Fashion Designing, Journalism, Animation, Performing Arts, Management, Engineering, Medicine, and Architecture.

During the event, students and parents will be able to connect with experts and educational institutions. Registration will be between 9 a.m. and 9.30 a.m, and the event from 9.30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sponsors

Platinum sponsor is Presidency University and Reva University.

Gold sponsors are Gitam University, Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences, RV University, SRM University AP, Mahindra University, Hindustan Group of Institutions Chennai, and Cambridge Institute of Technology.

Silver sponsors are Alliance University, Christ University, JSS Science & Technology University, JSS Academy of Higher Education & Research, Vidyavardhaka College of Engineering, Indian Institute of Fashion Technology, Soundarya Institutions, SRM IST Ramapuram Campus, Chanakya University, CMR University, East Point Group of Institution, Karnataka State Open University, Malnad College of Engineering, IIBS, Kammavari Sangha Institute of Technology, St Joseph Engineering College, Praxis Tech School, and S-VYASA Deemed-to-be-university.

Associate sponsors are SDM Dharwad, Shaheen Independent PU College, Khaja Bandanawaz University, Sharnbasva University, KLE Technological University, Visvesvaraya Technological University, BLDE Association Vijayapura, Karnataka Bank, Navkis College of Engineering.

Regional sponsor is Parivarthana Business School.

For details, contact Ph: 9845095781 / 9448160126 / 9448871815.

Entry is free. All participating students will get career counselling book free.

NIA chargesheets two men for pushing Bangladeshi nationals into forced labour

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Continuing investigations into the human trafficking network case, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Saturday chargesheeted two men for allegedly illegally crossing into India 10 years ago and pushing Bangladesh nationals into forced labour.

NIA investigations have revealed that Haldar and Idris, who had crossed into India through Benapole at the Indo-Bangladesh border, initially worked as waste segregators.

They later rented land at Seegehalli and Margondanahalli, respectively, in Karnataka and started their waste segregation units by constructing godowns and temporary sheds. They used to employ trafficked Bangladesh nationals and force them into hard labour on meagre wages.

Six injured in KSRTC bus accident

The bus that met with an accident.

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Six persons, including the conductor and driver of a KSRTC bus, sustained injuries when the vehicle crashed into the divider on a flyover on the national highway near Nelamangala in northwest Bengaluru on Saturday. They were sitting in the front of the bus. Several other passengers suffered minor injuries.

The police, along with passersby, helped the passengers get out of the bus and rushed the injured to hospitals. The medical report of the driver is awaited to determine whether he was under the influence of alcohol. A technical team is inspecting the bus to determine the reason for the accident.The bus was travelling from Somwarpete to Bengaluru and was moving up the ramp of the flyover at Madanayakanahalli when it crashed into the median. The bus remained dangling from the flyover for some time. The front portion of the bus was completely damaged. Police used a crane to put the bus back on the road. Traffic movement on the stretch was disrupted for some time.

Demand to make harassment of students a criminal offence

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A group of citizens gathered for a peaceful protest at Freedom Park on Saturday in the aftermath of a third-year engineering student who jumped to death at the PES University, Electronics City campus on May 14. They also demanded that harassment of students by authorities at educational institutions should be made a criminal offence.

Since July 2023, there have been four student deaths on two campuses of PES University. The parents of the first victim, Aditya Prabhu, were present at the protest.

No contact

"PES University made no contact with us or extended their condolences or even apologised to us when we lost our son," said Asha Prabhu, Aditya's mother.

Although there were three professors named in the case of Aditya Prabhu and charged with abetment of suicide under section 306, the management did not take any action, she said. "Forget about dismissing; they did not even suspend the professors, which speaks volumes about the attitude of the university towards its students," she alleged.

Dushant Dubey, a social worker of St. Broseph Foundation, no action had been taken against the University till date.

(Those in distress or those having suicidal tendencies can call Arogya Sahayavani Ph.: 104 for help.)

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY G20

E-Tender Notice No. SE01-2024-25

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders for the following works.

Sl.	Name of the Work	Approx. Value
1	Provision of Solar Roof Top Photo Voltaic power system in New Carriage Lift Shop.	Rs. 89,10,960/-
2	Design, supply, installation, testing & commissioning of 15k Wp On-Grid SRTPV power plant on the roof of substation building at CWS/MYSS.	Rs. 11,17,815/-
3	**Sub Work - 1 :** Mysuru Workshop : Electrical arrangements to Upgradation of storage, material handling facilities and IT related infrastructure inside shop floor. **Sub Work - 2 :** Setting up of Design and Mechatronics lab with improved facilities at CWS-MYSS. **Sub Work - 3 :** Mysuru Workshop : Electrical arrangements to Supply, Installation and Commissioning of 15 KLD capacity Sewage Treatment Plant.	Rs. 11,56,807/-

Last date for submission of bids: **Up to 11:00 Hrs on 12-06-2024**

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in

Deputy Chief Electrical Engineer
Mysuru

PUB/83/AAS/PRB/SWR/2024-25

South Western Railway - SWR SWRRLY SWRRLY

Government of Karnataka
(KARNATAKA RURAL WATER SUPPLY & SANITATION DEPARTMENT)
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, RURAL WATER SUPPLY & SANITATION, DIVISION KALABURGI-585105

No:EE/RDW&S/Dvn/Tech/2024-25/193 Dated : 17-05-2024

KPPP SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION (Two cover)

The Executive Engineer Rural Drinking water & Sanitation Division, Kalaburagi on behalf of Honorable Governor, Karnataka here by invites separate Technical & Financial bid tender for Water supply works from eligible Agency detailed as below.

The Tender Document with detailed conditions can be obtained through web site https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/ and should be submitted through E-procurment system only 1) Name of work: **Jewargi Taluka-02 (Indent No 7982 & 7884/call-2) & Aland Taluka-01 (Indent No 7977)**, 2) Head of A/C: JJM, 3) Eligibility of Contractor: Class- I, 4) Tender Amount: **Min 18,26,45,666/-, Max 168,96,88,978/-**, 5) Date of Commencement downloading of Bidding document: **16-05-2024 11:00am**, 6) Cost of tender form and EMD: As per KPPP portal, 7) Pre Bid Meeting : As per KPPP portal, 8) Last Date to submit bids on e-portal: **29-05-2024 4.00pm**, 9) Opening of Techincal Bid: **30-05-2024 4.01pm**, 10) Opening of Financial Bid: **03-06-2024 11:00am**, 10) Address for any clarification reg.tender: Office of the Executive Engineer, Rural Drinking water & Sanitaion Division, PRE division 1st floor Kusanoor road Kalaburagi

Sd/- Executive Engineer
RDW&S Division, Kalaburagi

DIPR/Kalaburagi/06/KSMC&A/2024-25

Government of Karnataka
(Rural Drinking Water and Sanitation Department)
Office of The Executive Engineer, Rural Drinking Water and Sanitation Division,Shivamogga.

No.:EE:RDW&SD:DS:J.E.-1:MVS:Kumsi,Gajanur KPPP:2024-25:120 Date: 18.05.2024

Tender Notice (Through e-procurement)

On behalf of the Governor of Karnataka, Itemwar Tenders are invited in Standard Tender Document of work KW-4as per Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 2000 forthe work of "Multi-Village Water Supply Scheme Covering Kumsi, Gajanur& Other 102 Habitations in 88 Villages of ShivamoggaTaluk in Shivamogga District on DBOT basis under JalJeevan Mission" coming in the limits of ShivamoggaTaluk under the jurisdiction of Rural Drinking Water and Sanitation Division, ShivamoggaDistrict from Authorised contractors (Class 1 and above) registered up to 2020-25 in Panchayat Raj Engineering Department /Public Works Department. Those submitting Form Fee & E.M.D. through e-payment can submit through credit/debit card.

1. Date & Place of Pre-Bid Meeting: 24.05.2024 at 11.00 AMOffice of The Executive Engineer, Rural Drinking Water and Sanitation Division, Shivamogga. **2**. Last date for submission of filled Tenders through online (E-procurement): 01.06.2024 at 16.00 PM. **3**. Date of opening technical bid : 03.06.2024 at 11.00 AM. **4**. Date of opening financial bid: 04.06.2024 at 16.00 PM. **5**. Time period fixed for completion of the work: 15 Months

If the above mentioned dates are declared as public holidays the next day will be considered. Details of Tender works, conditions and corrigendum or changes and information containing the Rules can be obtained in website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in

Sl. No. 1. Indent Number: RWSSD/2024-25/WS/WORK INDENT 7975 **Name of Work:** Multi-Village Water Supply Scheme Covering Kumsi,Gajanur & Other 102 Habitations in 88 Villages of Shivamogga Taluk in Shivamogga District on DBOT basis under Jal Jeevan Mission **Amount put to Tender (Rs. In lakhs):** 8085.19 **E.M.D. Amount (Rs. In lakhs):** 8085000/- **Time period fixed for completion**: 15 Months

Sd/-Executive Engineer, Rural Drinking Water and Sanitation Division, Shivamogga

DIPR/smg/KSMCA/No.09/05/24-25/11

Hunger pangs: Workers take a meal break at the work site.

Ready to go: A transport system eases the carriage of lignite to the thermal plant for power generation.

Efficient route: Lignite is loaded on a long-distance curved conveyor belt, to avoid vehicular transport inside the mine.

Late shift: A view of the mine at night.

Nature's way: Trees that grew naturally over the years in an overburden dump.

Cricket fans treated to a Saturday night thriller

The match was a must win for RCB to qualify for the play-off stage of the IPL tournament

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

RCB players greet the fans after beating CSK in Bengaluru on Saturday. K. BHAGYA PRAKASH

On an overcast Saturday, with fears of a washout of the make-or-break IPL clash between Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Chennai Super Kings looming, thousands of cricket fans had made their way to the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru. Finally, it turned out to be an encounter that they would remember for a long time. RCB qualified for the playoffs by beating CSK by 27 runs.

After the match, at many places in the CBD, especially on M.G. Road, Brigade Road, and Church Street, jubilant RCB fans were seen rejoicing. In several places, fans set off crackers to celebrate what was a spectacular comeback for RCB. Many CSK supporters were seen leaving the stadium disappointed.

The atmosphere inside and outside the stadium was electric, with the fan frenzy peaking much ahead of the match in the evening. Hours before the match, long queues and a sea of red, blue, and yellow jerseys were seen everywhere around the stadium and in the Namma Metro trains and stations. Vendors who were face painting or selling merchandise did brisk business.

Ticket counters were crowded with people trying to grab the last tickets before the match. On the other hand, tickets for the game were being sold in black at exorbitant prices.

According to an RCB fan who bought a ticket on May 17, a ticket priced ₹4,800 was sold for ₹15,000. The ones priced ₹2,990 was being offered for ₹13,000. On Saturday afternoon, tickets priced around ₹4,000 were allegedly being offered for ₹20,000 in black.

With a surge in demand for tickets, scamsters were on the prowl. Cyber scamsters, after showing physical tickets, allegedly asked fans to make a payment using a QR code.

Some fans claim that while some were asking for an OTP, in many cases, suspected cybercriminals are sending fake messages claiming that money was not transferred. Hence, buyers end up making multiple transactions only to realise that they have been victims of a scam. Virat Kohli and M.S. Dhoni were clearly the big draws of the day. Sachin from Belagavi, who was spotted outside the stadium with his young children, said, "They are more excited just to see Dhoni. My daughter doesn't know anything about cricket, but she's still a big Dhoni fan. That's why I brought my two children to this match."

A group of RCB fans expressed their joy over the team's recent performance. "RCB has won five matches in a row and has been performing really well this IPL," said Suprajeet. Samannoya Roy, an IPL fan since 2011 and a big M.S. Dhoni supporter, was hoping for the rains to come to the aid of CSK.

30 households flooded twice in recent rain struggle to return to normalcy

Poorvi S.
BENGALURU

Residents of Gururaj Layout in Ranka Colony in Bilekahalli, whose houses were inundated twice in the recent rains, are still struggling to return to normalcy as the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike's (BBMP) flood response team failed to arrive to pump the water out.

Water entered at least 30 houses on May 10 and May 14 following massive overflow from a nearby drain.

Rainwater along with sewage, waste, dead rodents and snakes entered these houses, which are still reeking of sewage stench, posing a risk to the health of the residents.

The affected residents were unable to eat food for hours, even the children went hungry as the cooking utensils were also contaminated. "As BBMP team did not arrive to pump the water out, we had to do it ourselves manually. Using buckets, we cleared the water and it took hours to complete the work. As the rainwater was filled with sewage, the floors were washed again using washing powders," said Ammu Murugan, whose house was affected.

A woman wades through the flooded entrance of her house.

S. Kavita, another resident, said apart from houses, multiple roads were flooded and the situation on the 6th main road was worse. Despite the residents calling the BBMP for help, no staff arrived at the affected locality, they alleged, adding that the residents were left to fend for themselves.

Residents say the problem in this layout is perennial and the BBMP is yet to come out with a permanent solution.

They also said the BBMP staff had arrived to help earlier, but were clueless as to why help was not extended this time.

Ms. Kavita said the health of the people is at risk as many areas have turned into mosquito breeding spots and the stench due to sewage water is still persisting. She urged the BBMP to fix the problem in the layout.

A BBMP official at the Bommanahalli office talking to *The Hindu* said the civic body was unable to pump water as the contract for pumping had ended and due to elections, there was a delay in calling fresh tender. He also said due to heavy traffic movement on the 6th main road in the layout, the culvert was damaged, resulting in the overflow of water.

He said a team would be dispatched to clear the debris and waste settled on the road due to flooding. However, he did not provide more details about when the civic body would fix the problem of culvert, which is one of key reasons for flooding in the area.

Meanwhile, BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Giri Nath, at a press meet on Saturday, said the BBMP is fully prepared to tackle the flooding if it rains in the next two days.

"The teams are working round the clock in flood prone areas and cleaning the drains. The public need not panic when the city receives rainfall," he said.

HOPCOMS annual mango and jackfruit mela from May 21

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The annual mango and jackfruit mela, organised by the Horticulture Producers Co-operative Marketing and Processing Society Limited (HOPCOMS), will be inaugurated on May 21 at the Hudson Circle HOPCOMS stall.

Until the end of May, the fruits will be sold at 5% to 10% discounted prices at 150 HOPCOMS stalls across the city. Different varieties of mangos, including Badami, Raspuri, Tothapuri, Malgova, Bainganapalli, Dashahari, Kesar, Mallika, Kalapad, Sakkargutthi and Sendhoora will be available . "The mangos grown by farmers of five districts which come under Bengaluru HOPCOMS limits - Bengaluru Urban, Bengaluru Rural, Kolar, Ramanagara and Chikkaballapur will be sold at the mela," officials of HOPCOMS said.

BDA installs board at CA site; warns trespassers of legal action

THE HINDU IMPACT

Shreyas H.S.
BENGALURU

The Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) has now put up a board at its Civic Amenities (CA) site at Gitanjali Layout, warning trespassers of initiating legal action. This development comes after *The Hindu* reported about the installation of a Ganesha idol at the BDA owned site by a recently formed citizens' forum.

The Gitanjali Citizens' Forum (GCF) installed the idol on Saturday, May 11, holding a ceremony. The forum also collected money from the local residents living in the vicinity. The forum argued that the idol was installed to protect the land from being grabbed, and it was earmarked for a temple.

According to the BDA Act, "The authority should not sell, or otherwise dispose of any area reserved for the public parks and playgrounds and civic amenities, for any other purpose and any disposition so made shall be null and void." The Act also states that the Authority shall have the power to lease, sell or otherwise transfer any area reserved for civic amenities for the purpose for which such area is reserved. About two months ago, the BDA fenced the plot and installed a signboard at the site stating that the property belongs to the authority, ostensibly to protect the CA site from land grabbers. Despite this board was put up, and the forum went ahead with the plan.

The BDA put up a new board on Fridaythat read, "This land (area) bearing survey number 63/1 located Thippasandra village in Varthur hobli at Bengaluru East taluk is the property of the BDA. The trespassers will face legal action."

Timings
BENGALURU

SUNDAY, MAY. 19	
RISE 05:54	SET 18:39
RISE 15:17	SET 02:51
MONDAY, MAY. 20	
RISE 05:53	SET 18:39
RISE 16:03	SET 03:25
TUESDAY, MAY. 21	
RISE 05:53	SET 18:39
RISE 16:50	SET 04:00

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	34	25
Mysuru	30	22
Bengaluru	29	22

Bengaluru Today
30°C Morning will be pleasant Day will be slight warm and humid. Spell of moderate to heavy rain and thundershower with gusty winds to occur.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
29°C Weather will be slight warm and humid. Night will comfortable. Spell of moderate to heavy rain and thundershower to occur.

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THE HINDU
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Namma Metro Yellow Line trial electrification

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Bangalore Metro Rain Corporation Limited (BMRCL) has issued a warning against entering the viaduct in the wake of the trial electrification of the Namma Metro Yellow Line on Saturday.

The BMRCL has issued the public notice saying, "This is to inform the public that the 33 kV cables passing along the BMRCL viaduct from the BTM layout station platform of the Reach 5 section of BMRCL to the buffer end of the R.V. Road station (BTM Layout station platform, Jayadeva station, Ragigudda station and R.V. Road station buffer end) and the 750 volts DC third rail sections of the viaduct will be electrified from May 18."

"In addition, in Reach 5 section from Hebbagodi Depot/RSS (Viaduct) section to Bommasandra station and RV Road station buffer end, 16 stations and viaduct (Hebbagodi depot/RSS, Bommasandra station, Hebbagodi station, Huskur road station, Infosys station, Electronic city station, Beratena Agrahara station, Hosa road station, Singsandra station, Kudlu Gate station, Hongasandra station, Bommanahalli station, Central Silk Board station, BTM station, Jayadeva station, Ragigudda station and R.V. Road station buffer end) will be electrified. Directly connecting 750 volt DC third rail or 33 kV cables in any way can pose a fatal hazard. Hence, BMRCL has warned against entering the viaduct in this area without permission."

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BJP cadre in coast sulk over being 'taken for granted'

Dissatisfaction over choice of candidates for the June 3 Legislative Council polls and two 'rebel' candidates being in the fray are symptomatic of this trend

Raviprasad Kamila
MANGALURU

The June 3 Legislative Council elections in Karnataka has two BJP rebel candidates from the coastal belt in the fray. Both claim that they are "filling a void" as the saffron party has "sidelined" Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts by not fielding locals in the South West Graduates' and South West Teachers' constituencies this time.

In fact, many in the party cadre are sulking as they feel that they have been "taken for granted" in the BJP strongholds.

Three-term Udupi MLA K. Raghupathi Bhat is contesting from the Graduates' constituency and facing Dhananjaya Sarji, a doctor from Shivamogga, whom the BJP is backing.

K. Raghupathi Bhat

S.R. Harish Acharya

Another rebel, S.R. Harish Acharya, has filed his nomination papers from the Teachers' constituency, where the Janata Dal (Secular), the BJP's alliance partner, has fielded K. Bhoje Gowda, MLC, for the second time.

Bhat's outburst

In his recent outburst, Mr. Bhat said the party has "disciplined workers" in the coastal belt who follow its diktat, but they have been taken for granted for that very reason.

"It can no longer continue. We (the party workers) will take appropriate decisions whenever required," Mr. Bhat said.

The former MLA pointed out that the party won 12 of the 13 Assembly seats in the twin districts in the 2018 elections. It won 11 seats in the 2023 elections by losing Puttur, again owing to the rebel factor in the BJP over the selection of the candidate.

And yet, the coastal belt was "ignored", he contended.

Mr. Acharya argued that being an educational hub, denying ticket, particularly in the Teachers' constituency, is "a question of self-respect of teachers and voters."

Silent support?

Interestingly, none of the BJP functionaries in the twin districts have uttered a word against the two rebels, indicating they do not disagree with their contention, even though they may not have openly stated it.

Endorsing the view of Mr. Bhat, a former president of the Dakshina Kannada unit of the party told *The Hindu* on the condition of anonymity: "Mr. Bhat's outburst is an expression of what many workers feel. They are of the view that the coastal belt has been let down."

The BJP leader said that the belt has been "sidelined" notwithstanding the fact that it won the Dakshina Kannada Lok Sabha seat (erstwhile Mangaluru) for eight consecutive terms and the Udupi-Chikkamagaluru seat for five terms since 1998, except for two breaks in 1999 and in the 2012 by-elections.

Stating that the morale of party workers is at stake, a former BJP legislator, who held different positions in the party, said there appears to be an attempt by some leaders to weaken the BJP leadership in the coastal belt through such efforts.

It was 'inevitable'

Taking a different line of argument, another former legislator said that it was "inevitable" for the party to cede the Teachers' constituency to the Janata Dal (Secular) for two reasons: it had won it in the last elections and the BJP is bound to respect the alliance.

"The Sangh Parivar leaders had agreed to the alliance, but they did not interfere in the matter of picking the constituency to be ceded to the Janata Dal (Secular)," he said.

Obliquely pointing fingers at senior leader B.S. Yediyurappa, another senior leader alleged that "a Lingayat strongman" was behind the denial of ticket to Mr. Bhat, taking into consideration caste and financial factors.

The Central leadership has not interfered in the selection of candidates for the Council polls, he claimed.

Some 'rebels' mollified

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Suresh Sajjan, a BJP leader, who had filed his nomination from the North East Graduates' constituency against the party's official candidate Amarnath Patil, announced on Saturday that he would withdraw from the fray.

He met senior party leader B.S. Yediyurappa and State president B.Y. Vijayendra on Saturday, and announced his decision later. This comes a day after E.C. Ningaraju, BJP candidate from South Teachers' constituency, announced he would withdraw his nomination in favour of JD (S) candidate Vivekananda, after the seat was given to the regional party in the alliance.

Mr. Vijayendra said that he was confident that rebellion in the BJP ranks in the South West Teachers' and the South West Graduates' constituencies, where S.R. Harish Acharya and K. Raghupati Bhat have announced they will contest, will also be sorted out over the next two days.

Act against Prajwal as per law, says Deve Gowda

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda, who celebrated his 91st birthday on Saturday, said that while every possible action should be taken against his grandson and Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna as per the law, cases against his son and Holenarasipur MLA H.D. Revanna were "created" to arrest him. This is the first comment by the Janata Dal (Secular) supremo on the sex abuse case being investigated by the SIT.

Former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda, along with his son Balakrishna Gowda, at a temple at J.P. Nagar in Bengaluru on Saturday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Mr. Deve Gowda had not stepped out of his Padmanabhanagar residence in Bengaluru since April 27 when Mr. Prajwal left for Germany.

Mr. Revanna was arrested in the abduction case from the same house on May 4, and returned to it after being released on bail on May 14.

The last time the former PM was seen in public was when he cast his vote, along with his wife, in his village Paduvalahippe, Holenarasipur, Hassan on April 26. He emerged out of his Padmanabhanagar residence in Bengaluru on Saturday morning to visit a temple on his birthday.

"H.D. Kumaraswamy has already spoken at length on behalf of our entire family and the party. As Mr. Kumaraswamy has said, it is the government's responsibility to take action against Mr. Prajwal under the law. We have no objection whatsoever to this. But, the people of the State have also realised by now that the cases against Mr. Revanna were created to target him. He has already got bail in one case and the judgement on a bail petition in another case is expected on May 20," Mr. Deve Gowda said.

However, echoing Mr. Kumaraswamy's and the BJP's line of attack against the State government and Congress leader D.K. Shivakumar, Mr. Deve Gowda said: "Many people are involved in this case. I don't want to take anyone's name at this time. All of those involved should be brought to book, and all women who have been victimised should be provided justice."

'Sex abuse case will get a new twist after Prajwal's interrogation'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Agriculture Minister N. Cheluvarayaswamy on Saturday said that the SIT probe into alleged multiple sexual abuse cases in Holenarasipur in Hassan district will take a new twist, only after the interrogation of Hassan MP and JD(S) leader Prajwal Revanna, who was allegedly involved in multiple cases.

Mr. Cheluvarayaswamy said that the former Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy should advise his nephew, Mr. Prajwal, to face the SIT probe.

This comes a day after the BJP leader and advocate Devaraje Gowda, arrested for allegedly having a hand in the circulation of videos, suggested the involvement of Mr. Cheluvarayaswamy in the process, and also alleged that Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar had offered ₹100 crore to him, to level charges against Mr. Kumaraswamy of being involved in the distribution of pen drives containing explicit videos of sexual abuse.

The Minister said he had no connection with the alleged sexual abuse and claimed that Mr. Devaraje Gowda was in possession of the pen drives for the last one year. Instead of handing them over to the police or the judiciary, the BJP leader had been levelling charges against him and other Vokkaliga community leaders, he said.

Meanwhile, asked about Mr. Devaraje Gowda's allegations, Mr. Shivakumar said: "If Mr. Devaraje Gowda has any proof, he must lodge a complaint with the Lokayukta. He must be mentally unstable and my sympathies are with him. The media is aware and intelligent enough to separate the chaff from the grain."

Replying to former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda demanding action against all those who are involved in the pen drive case, he said: "Mr. Deve Gowda has gone to a temple on his birthday. May God give him health and happiness. I pray that his pain goes away. I wish him a happy birthday."

Activists to hold protest rally in Hassan on May 30

The Hindu Bureau
SHIVAMOGGA

Writers and activists from different parts of Karnataka have resolved to hold a protest meet in Hassan on May 30, demanding the arrest of JD(S) leader and MP Prajwal Revanna, facing sexual abuse allegations.

This was decided in a consultative meeting held at Kannada Sahitya Parishat Bhavana in Hassan on Saturday. The meeting was convened under the banner of the Karnataka Rajya Janapara Chalavaligala Okkoota. Representatives of women, Dalit, farmers' and workers' organisations attended the meeting.

Roopa Hassan, poet and activist, said the victims have not been able to come out of the trauma. "Men with political interests are making use of the women as pawns in their game," she alleged.

Senior advocate B.T. Venkatesh felt that bringing back Mr. Prajwal, the accused, from abroad was not a big task for the Centre. "The Union Home Ministry knows very well where the accused is. He can be arrested if it decides to do so," he opined.

Writers and activists staged a protest demanding the arrest of Prajwal Revanna in Hassan on Saturday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Yashwanth, leader of the Karnataka Prantha Raitha Sangha, said the former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda should write to the Centre to cancel Mr. Prajwal's diplomatic passport. "If he does so, he will win people's sympathy," he said.

Lok Sabha polls: Candidates from around 60 political parties contested this time

Afshan Yasmeen
BENGALURU

Around 60 political parties fielded candidates in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls in Karnataka. In 2019, the number of parties in the fray had crossed the half-century mark with 56. In 2014, there were 38 parties in the fray in Karnataka.

During the previous Assembly elections, at least eight new political parties had been listed as Registered Unrecognised Political Parties (RUPP) by the Election Commission in the State. While 478 candidates contested the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, 434 contested the 2014 polls. This year, a total of 474 candidates are contesting.

Several parties that pop up only during elections are never heard of again. Except for candidates contesting on a ticket from national parties and a few regional parties, it has always been a miserable defeat for those contesting from other parties. However, they enter the fray every time during elections. Many parties that contested last time have disappeared this time.

There are a total of 95 political parties in Karnataka. FILE PHOTO

A total of 60 parties, including national parties such as the BJP, the Congress, the BSP, the CPI, the regional JD(S), and more than 54 RUPPs, have contested this Lok Sabha elections.

Prominent among the RUPPs are the Kannada Chaluvali Vatal Paksha, the Karunadu Party, the Rani Chenamma Party, the Bharatiya Belaku Party, and the Vichara Jagruti Congress.

While the Congress has contested 28 constituencies, the BJP has contested in 25 constituencies giving up three seats to the JD(S), its alliance partner. While the BSP has contested 22 seats, the CPI has entered the fray in one seat. Apart from this, the Karnataka Rajya Samithi (KRS) and Kannada actor Upendra's Uttama Prajakeeya Paksha have contested in most of the constituencies.

While Bengaluru Central and Davangere have the highest number of candidates from parties at 13 and 12, respectively, Chickballapur has the highest number of Independents at 20.

There are a total of 95 political parties in the State, including the five national parties [the BJP, the Congress, the Aam Aadmi Party, the BSP, the CPI], the JD(S), and 89 RUPPs. Of these, around 60 are contesting this time, an official from the Election Commission said.

After April 2023, some political parties including the Bharatiya Praja Ikyata Party, the Country Citizen Party, the Kalyan Karnataka Party, the Kalyan Rajya Pragati Paksha, the Rashtriya Aakrakshaka Manch, the Republic Party of India (Bharat), and the Youngster Empowerment Party have registered in Karnataka.

A couple of these parties have also contested the Lok Sabha elections. The Kalyan Rajya Pragati Paksha led by Gali Janardhana Reddy, which was formed during the last Assembly elections, merged with the BJP during the Lok Sabha polls and lost its existence within a year.

'Modi is misinformed about Shakti scheme'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Saturday said that he was shocked by the statement of Prime Minister Narendra Modi that the Shakti scheme had resulted in loss of revenue for Namma Metro trains run by Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Ltd.

Speaking to reporters, he said: "The Prime Minister lacks information on the Shakti scheme [free bus travel for women] and hence he has said that the scheme has impacted revenues of Bengaluru metro. Namma Metro has earned a revenue of ₹130 crore in the last one year. The footfall too has gone up by 30% for the same period. Bengaluru metro is limited to Bengaluru, while the Shakti scheme has been rolled out keeping in mind people from across the State."

He said that the Shakti scheme was rolled out by the Congress to ease the burden of price rise and inflation on women.

"Metro is a joint initiative between the State and the Centre and it has done well over the last one year. Someone seems have provided incorrect information to the Prime Minister," he added.

"Women are doing 60 lakh trips per day in Karnataka. Women of the State are very happy with the Shakti scheme. Many other States are expressing interest to emulate this scheme," he said.

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Rajesh, Arya, Anjana & Lucky.
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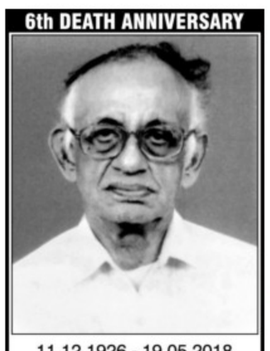

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Shobhana, Vivek & Vikram

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

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- The Bhagavad Gita 3.21

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MD Anesthesiology Doctor, Age: 34, 165cm fair, beautiful, cultured & homely. Settled in Chennai. Father Doctor Kerala Nair, Mother Tamil CSI. Doctor or Engineer groom preferred.
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Intercaste Doctor Parents seeks alliance for their only daughter MBBS, MD, very fair, good looking, affluent age 39yrs/162cm, Divorcee, Associate Professor, Private Medical College. Caste No Bar, only doctor groom preferred. Contact : 9443167551

SC/AD, Hindu Girl 28yrs, Doctor, M.S. Opthomology, Chennai Working Seeks Doctor Groom only. Ct: 94449 35460.

ENGINEER

Hindu Maruthuvar born May 95 Software Engineer seeks suitable Groom inland/abroad. Contact 9025690557.

KONKANI

Beautiful, Engineer Girl, Masters from London, India Settled
1988 Born, 5'4" Slim, fair Girl from affluent High Profile Konkonastha Brahmin Family, Short term issueless Divorcee, Seeks Compatible well educated Groom from well- settled business Family
Caste no Bar
SUDHIR BHATT
9920099889 / 9619101019 / 20
sudhirmatrim@gmail.com

MALAYALAM

HINDU EZHAVA Girl Gynecologist Working at Kannur Medical College 22.7.95 Uthiradam Upper Middle Class Seeks Same Profession Groom 8014205710

MUSLIM GIRL (33,159cm), M.Tech, Sr. Data Engineer (Techno Park, Tvm), D/o retd Govt officials with liberal values. Divorcee, no liabilities. 9656163623, 9446451249.

NRI

CHRISTIAN DOCTOR 33/165, seeks God fearing groom, from good Christian family, preferably professional working in UK. Contact: 9442990948

TAMIL

PARENTS OF God Fearing CSI Nadar girl fair, beautiful, very rich P.G in management, working in a MNC in India. Seek a God Fearing well educated groom from a rich family age 30 to 36 Parents Contract : 9840999703

THE HINDU
DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verify and make appropriate enquiries to satisfy themselves about the veracity of an advertisement before responding to any published in this newspaper. THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., the Publisher & Owner of this newspaper, does not vouch for the authenticity of any advertisement or advertiser or for any of the advertiser's products and/or services. In no event can the Owner, Publisher, Printer, Editor, Director/s, Employees of this newspaper/company be held responsible/liable in any manner whatsoever for any claims and/or damages for advertisements in this newspaper.

TAMIL

TAMIL MUSLIM Bride, 30/159cm, AVP in MNC at Bengaluru seeks qualified Tamil Muslim Groom working at Hyderabad/Bengaluru.Ct: 9080501299

ELITE TAMIL Muslim B.E., 23, Seeks qualified, Suitable Groom Contact : 90807 90001

CSI NADAR, 24/168cm, BE, Elite Family. Seeks Suitable Groom. Contact: 9380791999

CSI NADAR 25,MBA,VIP, Need:IAS,IPS, IFS, Group1, MBBS,business group, ME,MArch,RC Hindu Nadar Ok 9445286222

MUSLIM SLIM girl BE(CSC), 37 seeks qualified, employed, Never married Tamil Muslim Groom. 9444235779

TAMIL RC Fair 34/ 180cm/ 70kg/ MBBS, MS/ well settled family in Mumbai, seeks Doctor/ BE/ Auditor/ Business/ others, Caste no bar/ only Catholic. Contact: 9840784555

PILLAI 30 MBBS MS doing Mch Barani Chennai seeks Pg Dr Chennai Geetham 9884858014

ARCOT MUDALIAR/ Thuluva Vellala, BE (Computer Science– SVCE) 29/ 167, Magam, very fair seeks Mudaliar/ Pillai/ Iyer/ Intercaste alliance based in Chennai only from Upper Middle–Class families. Ct: 9840298002

✔ **HIGHLY EDUCATED** and well settled protestant Christian Nadar family invites suitable alliance for their fair, pretty, convent educated daughter with masters in engineering, 83 born; from well employed and good family background grooms.Marthomites and Jacobites are also considered. Divorcees without issues are also considered. Ph. No : 9176070624Email : thankannam@gmail.com

CHETTIAR 29YRS IT Professional Seeking Well Settled Affulent Groom, Caste No Bar. 9677214361 / 9840142562

HINDU NADAR Widow 43, IT Job Own House (grownup Son), Chennai. Seeks alliance Caste No Bar Ct: 9600103393

AGAMUDI MUDALIAR 32/165 Mirugasim Raghu in Lagnam PG(HR MNC) Seeks IIM/PG, Pillai Groom Also. 9176780777

VANIYA CHETTIAR, M.Sc, 43/157, Karthigai, Govt.Scntf. Officer seeks equally Qualified Employed Groom. Contact: 94452 07116

RICH MUDALIYAR 28yrs MBBS MD Elite business family in Chennai.Seeks Suitable Groom 9710093999/ 9710091999

MUKULATHOR Kallar 30Yrs/161cm Psychatrist, Natchathiram - Pooram, Rasi -Simman, seeks suitable Groom. Caste no bar. CT:99949-16611.

MAY 94/167 fair SC/PL BE , TCS Chennai, Parents Hindu/CSI. Seeks Groom Dr/Er, Govt Employee. 8056143638

ADIDRAVIDAR, AGE 27 BE, Govt 65, 000/– Fair, Well settled. Wants Suitable Groom. 08122289871 / 9444139323.

NAIDU, 33/170, Fair girl, MBBS prep PG, Seeks Doctor/Business groom Rich Family. BC/MBC. Ph: 99442 53292.

HINDU NADAR sisters, August 1994 / 167 cms / 63 kg, ME, Thiruvathirai, Mithunam. December 1998 / 166 cms / 60 kg, BE, MNC job Chennai, Poosam, Kadagam. Seeks suitable grooms. Ct: 96265 15511

SBI MANAGER, BE MBA,SC AD Hindu, 35yrs, Mesham–Bharani, seeking suitable & qualified Groom. Ph–8056104103

EMPLOYED GROOM Below 41 Yrs Required for a Hindu Nadar Divorcee 36 Yrs Getting Six Digit Pay . 9443156344

BRIDEGROOM WANTED For 27 Tamil / MS (CSE) , USA Software Engr , Seattle , WA.Similar profile wanted. Parents Inter Hindu & RCC. Email : goodrich3210@gmail.com

F–PILLAI, M–SENGUNTHAR, 28/153cms, Doctor MBBS Preparing for PG, Revathi, Meenam Seeks Suitable Groom BC/ OC/ FC/ MBC only. Ct: 9566230325

DEVENDRAKULA VELLALAR Thiruvathirai (4) 26/162 BE CIVIL Jr. Engr. Wrkg Southern Railways, Seeks Suitable Boy. 94436 86234.

RICH MUDALIYAR, 23yrs, MBA, Own constructions, Ware Houses & Landlord. Elite business in Chennai. Seeks Suitable Groom 9710093999/ 9710091999

MUDALIAR POOSAM 25/168 USA Citizen, B.Sc. Working IT, seeks Qlfd. Groom. Whatsapp: +91 7826029997

TAMIL

VANNIYA KULA KSHATRIYA Bride, 22 Years Old, M.Com, Seeks Groom from same caste upper middle class. mail id: mangalam.leelavathy@gmail.com

PILLAI / SOZHIYA Vellalar 29/ 162cm,B.Tech (NIT) (UPSC ASPIRANT) (GROUP–II Services TN on the anvil) Working as IT Presales, Seeks suitable Bridegroom, Ct:9443543456 /9442712849

48/163 MUDALIAR/PILLAI M.com MBA Seeks professionally Qualifd Unmarried Below 50 Clean habits CNB 9444837355/9500113136/ anbumatri@gmail.com

HINDU SC AD, Poorattathi/ Meenam, Age 35, M.C.A Working in a MNC company, seeking Educated Groom from a good family background, below 38 Years from any Tamil Speaking Community. Contact: 9840107770, 9952930893.

MBBS PG fair 50kg 5ft own clinic rich 37 mbc unmarried want any caste any degree send bhp to 9500933549

CHRISTIAN NADAR, 31, M.Com, Working in Chennai Bank. Small disability in leg. Seeks Groom. Ct.91767 93257

TIRUNELVELI HINDU NADAR Girl 26yrs, 5ft 6 inch M.Arch, working in US seeks a well-Qualified Groom Ct: 98401 00836

FAIR MUDALIAR 28/170cm BE MS seeks Well Settled Boy Decent Family Ct : 7904735344

GROOM WANTED: Viswakarma 34yrs, 5'3 wheatish Coimbatore based, B.Tech, Pvt 30K Monthly Maharam, Avittam, No Dosham. 98943-34457.

HINDU, VANNIYAR, 24, B.Pharm, Own Medical Shop, Seeks Doctor Groom Priority. Ph: 9444399715

25 YEARS, Saiva Pillai, LLB, working in top tier law firm as associate in Bangalore looking for groom from vegetarian family. Caste no bar Ph 9442452099, thehindu.id7@gmail.com

VANNIYAKULA KSHATRIYAR bride 36 years Tall, Fair, ME PhD Assistant Professor, only Daughter with strong family background seeks suitable Decent, Employed or Business Groom. Contact: 99443-14575.

SEEKING EMPLOYED bridegroom below 35y for Hindu SC fair, educated, homely & employed divorced 32y bride from Elite family. CNBar 9483542477

GROOM SOUGHT for Girl 44 Highly Educated Well placed Slim Vegetarian well Employed IT Professional Upper Middle Class Unconsummated Divorcee from Affluent Family. Contact Phone / WhatsApp 9789056615

HINDU SC AD 27 Rohini B.Tech working chennai seeks Bridegrooms working business Caste Nobar. Ph: 8667278947

BRIDEGROOM WANTED
29 yrs, Hindu Girl, MBBS, MD (Pulmonology) DNB, Fair, Chettiyar, working in Sri Ramachandra Medical College, Family is financially well off. Looking for well educated match.
Mb: 9840125521, 9940125555

BRAHMIN
South India's Leading Business Family seeking a groom for their daughter completed studies in foreign country
GROOM PREFERENCE
Age : (30 -32)
Height : 5.10ft & above from an leading Brahmin family
kssgrand20@gmail.com

VANIYAKULA KSHATRIYA / Kettai, Viruchigam / 28 / 5'3 / MS / (Ph.D) / Fair / Working in private sector at New York/ 120000 USD. Educated Bride's Parents seek well qualified US settled groom with a good family background. Hindu same caste, Mudaliyar,Pillai,Yadava, Mukkulathoor,Chettiar and other equivalent Preferably. Whatsapp: 99403 72423/ +9194447 20315

Groom Wanted
Chennai's Elite Industrialist seeking a Groom for his "DAUGHTER" Completed Masters at Ivey league (USA), running a successful business
Groom Preference
Age : (28-33), Height: 5.8ft & above, from an Affluent Family Caste no bar.
Contact :93536 81255

BRIDES WANTED

BUSINESS

AGE 37 Handsome, Well Settled Groom seeks VIP Girl and first Marriage, Remarriage, Divorce. Ct 9597834451

COSMOPOLITAN

DM– DOCTOR (Dec 91, Tamil, 185 cm, v.fair & h'some, clean habits, Hastham) needs a virtuous, tall, quite fair, pleasant PG Doctor / highly qualified bride, age 27–30 years, from educated Kongu Vellala, Kamma, Pillai, Mudaliyar, Nair, Gowda, Kapu or similar backgrounds. Prefers to settle in Coimbatore, Chennai, Bangalore, Kochi. Parents: 9342529547 / 9072118800.

LOOKING FOR bride Bangalore based 32Yrs, Education graduate Working in Central Govt. SC community. Any caste bride, looking beautiful well settled,family Graduate Ctc: 9113511457

KARKATHAR PILLAI 36, 5ft 7inch, fair and handsome, BE (Telecom), Officer Indian Army IT Branch, 30 lacs PA, never married, son of retd army officer looking for affable and well educated girl. Equal and sub caste no bar. 9448307862.

ENGLISH

South Indian Brahmin, Mar1988, 5'11" MSc Engg (UK), never married, working in Vancouver, Canada, seeks professionally qualified bride, willing to relocate. Contact WhatsApp 9967531921.

HINDI

1985/175CM, 50 Lakhs PA, Never Married, Bangalore. WhatsApp: 96290 12248

MALAYALAM

RC KERALITE Bachelor 37 Chennai, Banker looking for a suitable match. Contact no. 8697421740

VISHWAKARMA (CARPENTER– Malayalam) , 34/ 5ft 1inch, Punartham, Private Company Job in Coimbatore, needs suitable bride from same community Contact 9442267579

NAIR BOY, 32/180, Pooram Suddha Jathakam, MBA engaged as Deputy Manager in Family Business in Chennai Invited Proposals Nair Girls with Suddha Jathakam Ct: 9841428004/ 9444625522.

TAMIL

CSI CHRISTIAN NADAR Tamil, US Citizen 27/175/B.E.,M.S/Fair, Rich Family, Clean Habits, God Fearing seeks USA/UK/Australia/India Educated God Fearing Girl. Contact : 9003152133

CSI CHRISTIAN Nadar, 27, MS, USA seeks fair bride from same community, willing to relocate to USA. Ct: 9382266099

RC CHRISTIAN, 41yrs/170, B.E. Software Engineer, never married, working for mnc, Chennai. CT–9500188067

MUDALIAR, DIVORCEE, PhD, Professor, Pvt Eng.College, age 50,Magaram, Seeks educated unmarried/widow/ Divorcee without child from FC/ OBC (40–45yrs) No expectation Ct:9150799959

ARCHITECT, AGE 40, Height 5'6", Hindu (Reddy), Anusham–3, Chennai / Bangalore. Seeking Bride Age 31 to 38 Cast No Bar, Ct: +91 7708062990

MUDALIYAR, KETTAI,38/165, M. Tech.,(Ph.D),HOD, Pvt.Engg. College, Pondy. Seeks bride 29 to 36yrs 9442557578

HINDU , BE / SWE/ 32/ 5.7/Sc – Settled in Bangalore.Belongs to educated and affluent family.Seeking Bride from same/other community , from educated and well settled family.Contact no:9845401461.

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ELITE BRIDES WANTED

BRAHMIN, 39, 180 cms, MBA, Working Professional. Lives in Bangalore. Father is a retired person. Family is financially well off. Looking for a suitable match from any Brahmin Community. Contact: 6366448344

YADAV, 24, 177 cms, MBA, Entrepreneur. Lives in Coimbatore. Father is a Businessman. Family is financially well off. Looking for a like minded match from same community. Contact: 6366448344

VELLALAR, 48, 174 cms, Divorced, MS, Engg head. Lives in Bangalore. Father is a Businessman with a good net worth. Looking for an affable match from Bangalore/ Chennai Preferably upto 45 yrs. Contact: 6366448343

CHRISTIAN NADAR, 31, 180 cms, BE, Businessman. Lives in Chennai. Belongs to an affluent business family. Looking for an amiable match. Preferably Tamil Nadu/ Pondicherry. Contact: 6366448343

ELITE GROOMS WANTED

BRAHMIN, 25, 163 cms, Doctor, MBBS. Lives in Chennai. Father is a working professional. Family is financially well off. Looking for a like minded Doctor match anywhere from India. Contact: 6366448343

BRAHMIN/NAI, CASTE NO BAR, 28, 160 cms, Doctor, MD in Pediatrics. Lives in Chennai. Father is a Working Professional. Family is financially well off. Looking for a like minded Doctor match from Andhra/Telangana. Contact: 6366448343

NADAR, 24, 162 cms, Entrepreneur, MBA. Lives in Tuticorin. Father is a Businessman. Looking for a compatible match from Business class family from the same community. Contact: 6366448344

VANNIYA KULA KSHATRIYAR, 28, 168 cms, MS, Doctor, Lives in Salem. Father is a Businessman. Looking for a well educated Groom from same community. Contact: 6366448344

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Guaranteed monthly matching profiles | Dedicated Relationship Managers | 15 years of matchmaking experience
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COSMOPOLITAN

HINDU 45, BBA handsome well settled–Coimbatore 1st marriage, divorcee/widow, CNB seeks bride. 8903712843.

SMART HEALTHY businessman settled 55yrs living single in Chennai Seeks Widow/Divorce bel 40yrs 9790986102

DIVORCEE

ADIDRAVIDAR DIVORCE –Seeking Childless Widow/Divorcee/Spinster, simple educated bride, aged between 35 to 40 years for a legally divorced, well educated (B.E) ,45 yrs groom working as Project Manager in MNC. Religion no bar. Contact : 8122589004

DOCTOR

30, SURGEON, seeks doctor bride (MBBS, MD/ MS, DM/ MCh), Kannada/ Tamil, OBC/ BC, Ph: 8618607705

HINDU NADAR, 28/165cm, MBBS, MD, 1 Lakh per month, Seeks Suitable Bride Contact: 9380791999

BRIDE WANTED Rich Mudaliyar, 30yrs, MBBS, MS, Elite business family in Chennai.Ct: 9710093999/ 9710091999

MALAYALAM

MALAYALI EZHAVA boy 40/182 Anusham IT professional Settled in Chennai, looking for an educated understanding partner from Kerala/ Tamilnadu. Contact: 9940122336/ 9884120895

NRI

NAIDU 29/180CM, Pooratathi, BTech MS, Working as Research Engr, PR of Sweden Contact Father 9566682220

TAMIL

TAMIL MUSLIM 28/172 MS Gen surgery seeks prof qualified bride Ct: 82200 42091 mdullahsafi@gmail.com

VELLALAR/PILLAI, 29/170CM, BA.BL (HONS), Advocate, seeks Bride (sub caste no bar) TN. CT:89398 45694

TAMIL MUSLIM –May 1994/5'9" Handsome MS (USA) Senior SW Engr.USA. Seeks Bride (Tamil) Fair, Tall (5'4"– 5'9") Age (24–27yrs)– Engr. background– working/ Studying in USA or willing to move to USA. Ct: 9444149649 (Whatsapp) with Profile & Photos.

TAMIL

Hindu SC/AD. 36Yrs, BE, Sr. Software Engineer, TCS Chennai. never married Seeks suitable Groom Ct: 9952147216

HINDU, 37/5.2', Pooratadhi, Kumbam, M.A, M.Phil., Govt.Job, First marriage seeks suitable well employed Groom within TamilNadu. CNB. 8838352394

PILLAI / MUDALIAR, 34, MD, Well Settled family seeks Groom aged 34-36 yrs, Engineer/ Business/ Doctor. Contact: 9345855735

Tamil Muslim, Fair, Gd Looking, 26/ 160, B.N.Y.S, doing M.D, Seeks Doctor Engineer Professionals Preferably from Tirunelveli & Chennai. Contact: 7867044233, talk2nilar@gmail.com

TELUGU

BALIJA NAIDU, 28/152cm, Fair, PG, MNC Chennai Ct: 6380984534/saanvigklr@gmail.com

TELUGU

RICH NAIDU, 27yrs, CA, Own Firm, Elite Business family. Seeks Suitable Groom. Ct: 9710093999/ 9710091999

BALIJA NAIDU, Thiruvathurai/ Midhunam/ 27/165/MS / Canda PR/ Well Settled seeks Well qualified & Well settled groom from Canada. Caste No bar, Ct– 9840224474

AFFLUENT KAMMA 40 good looking bride M.Sc Psychology seeks well settled handsome qualified groom. Subsect no bar. 9444410207/ tvm1945@gmail.com

KAMMA 25/170 Pretty Smart affluent Girl. Grooms from Elite business or rich IT professionals from Chennai/ Bangalore/Hyderabad Ct:7305010105

RICH NAIDU 27yrs, B.Tech, Elite Business Family in Chennai.Seeks Suitable Groom Ct:9710093999/ 9710091999

TELUGU

GROOM WANTED Rich Kamma Naidu 27yrs, B.Tech,Own Constructions, Resorts & Finance,Elite business family in Chennai Ct: 9710093999/ 9710091999

NAIDU 25/165 Fair, Beautiful,BE,SWE INFOSYS, CH-500000.PA, Wellsettled-Family, CNB,9043991629,9043987029

URDU

URDU MUSLIM, 25 / 5.5', Fair, Engineer, Working in Sydney seeks suitable Educated groom,26–29 yrs/Australia, Ct 9840242887, 9840281047.

URDU MUSLIM,35 /5.5', IT Engineer in Bank. Abu Dhabi seeks bridegroom 35–40 years, Educated, willing to move to Abu Dhabi.Ct–7845777583.

Urdu Muslim, Good looking, Fair, 22/166, M.com seeks Educated & settled Groom. Contact: 9442600462, showhath@gmail.com

TAMIL

HINDU SAIVAPILLAI Thanusu Uthiradam 30,174cm BE MBA SoftwareMNC 10L/PA Bangalore Seeks Same Caste working Graduate Bride. 9487995548

HINDU NADAR, 34/170, BE, Own Business, 5L p/m, Divorcee, Elite family. Seeks Suitable Bride Ct:9047192999

HINDU NADAR 29/175cm, B.Tech, 1,75, 000p/m Seeks Suitable Bride Contact: 9380791999

AGAMUDAYA MUDALIYAR, 42 Mirugasiridam PhD TN Govt Job Rs 1.35 Lakh P/ M. "No Broker' Divorced : 7904550883

PILLAI/SOZHIYA Vellalar, 29Yrs, 155cm, B.Tech, MBA, Working as Senior HR Executive in a reputed Company. Father College Prof (Rtd), Mother Agri Officer, Only son. Seeks suitable Bride. Subsect no bar. Cont: 94426-29455, 94889-60455.

HINDU KALLAR, 33yrs, PG Er. (Civil) seeks Engineering Bride from Southern District. Same caste only. Ct: 9123581088

Vanniyakulashatriyar 26/170cm, MS Canada. Thulam / Visaham / Ragu &Kethu 2nd Place,Employed in Bank@ Toronto seeks Educationally Qualified Bride from Decent Family. 9840087405

OFFICER 50, Govt Dept Separated Looking for Independent, Broad Minded, Well Settled Woman, 45 + With or Without Issues as a Companion Genuine Person. Contact : 9585245551

SC AD 28/B.Tech.,MBA.,Asst. Manager (Wipro)1,30,000/– pm Seeks Bride. Ph:9444993417 / Whatsapp:7397674481

HINDU NADAR 32/173cm, BE, 300000 per month, well settled. Seeks Suitable Bride. KA Raman Nadar 9380791999

YADAVA, 41 First Marriage,Pvt Ltd Chennai, National Head 18Lac PA Seeks Bride CNB/Divorcee ok :8610014920

VANNIYAR 37/168 BE, 1.45L, Visagam4th, Working in TATA Group of Company seeks Suitable Bride same CasteCt:9944330445/mpragathees@gmail.com

CHETTIAR, 30YRS, MBA London, Landlord, Madurai seeks good looking Bride. Caste No Bar. Ct: 94437 26677, Email Id: chiyanrajaram2@gmail.com

RC NADAR Groom, 44 yrs Holding Senior Management Role in MNC, Divorcee No Kids Seeks Bride 9787586387

HINDU NADAR, 30yrs / 180cm, BE MBA, 33 LPA in MNC, Chennai, Well Educated Affluent Family, Seeking Well Educated Bride From a Similar Family Background. 9841054900

MUDALIAR 54 Divorcee Ph.D Engg abroad return Shares trade 5Cr properties sk suitable bride 40–45 no issues CNB 9500367269 sbkkeck@yahoo.com

IYER MAGAM 40 B.Com 360000 PA Seeks any Veg. Girl Contact : 80127 58006

BRIDE WANTED Elite Mudaliyar 25yrs MBA Own Constructions & Finance, Business family 9710093999/ 9710091999

HINDU DEVENDIRA kula vellalar M.E., 29/168 Asst. Engg. in PWD seeks suitable bride 8667380725, 8825793743

MUDALIYAR 26/165CM, BE, M.Tech, 1 Lakh per month, Elite Family, Seeks Suitable Bride. Contact: 8939691888

PILLAI 38/186 B E (EEE) @ COGNIZANT Chennai as IT professional, Seeks suitable Bride Veg Only. 9042755506

HINDU SC AD 32 Yrs 161cm B.Tech, IT Company,Fair, Own House, Well Settled, Caste No Bar, Seeks Qualified& Good Natured Bride. Ct: 8680095094

HINDU IYER Boy age 35, US citizen, senior data scientist in New York city. Seeks an Educated Hindu Girl born or raised in the US. mail : gvaidyanathan@comcast.net Chennai Ct: Prabha Rao +914428132491

TAMIL

SOUTH INDIAN BRAHMIN BRIDE WANTED
Suitable match for IYER boy (32+ years, 180cm, fair, B.E. Haritha gothram, Vadama, Moolam) working in Singapore for MNC. Family well-settled in Singapore.
Prefer SOUTH INDIAN BRAHMIN GIRL (subsect/region no bar; age around 28, fair, graduate, vegetarian and good family background).
WhatsApp details to +65-9154-7135

TAMIL

BE Bits Pilani 6'1 Mudaliar 32yrs Sr Product Mgr Corporate Bengalore 43 Lac PA, Bride 5 '4 Same or Allied Castes Tamil,Telugu. Ct: 7382620365

SENGUNTHA MUDALIYAR 36/167/BE 1Lak TCS, Thiruvatherai/Mithunam Sevai, Seek Bride from Mudaliyar. 9940241415

GROOM IS IAS exam–passed, 29, kettai, handsome, from Vaniyachettiar (Chekkala) community. No siblings, based in Chennai. Bride expected from elite families. Caste no bar. Contact 6381047104

RICH MUDALIYAR, 31yrs, ME, MBA, Well Educated Family. Seeks Suitable Bride Contact: 9962791888/ 7094991999

B.E 29/180 cm, software, 32 L/ PA, parents intercaste Pillai/ Brahmin. Seeking educated, Hindu, good looking, employed girl, CNB. Contact: 9487783881

SOUTH INDIAN Vegetarian MBBS Doctor serving in IAF, Oct 1997 born 169 cms Mougalya Gothram, Rohini Star, Rishaba Rasi seeks Vegetarian Doctor Girl. 9442063443, 9003942248

BRAHMIN, N BALAJI 38, MBA, HR Manager, 1 Lac PM, Electrosteel pvt Ltd, Kalahasthi, Seeking alliance employed or not working, and have privilege of bringing her dependent Parents. Contact: balajimnm2011@gmail.com, Ph: 9962148742, 8056256105

Hindu Vysya Chettiyar 58yrs Self Employed Rs.6 L.P.A, Pure Veg. Seeks Bride. Caste No Bar. Ct: 94990 14886.

HINDU Mudhaliar 27/165cm BE., MS, working in Bosch, Czceh Republic well Educated & Affluent family seeks only Hindu Graduate Bride Ct:9884077047/ nagalakshmiashokkumar@gmail.com

KONGU VELALA GOUNDER
28/180 Hand some, clean habits, B.sc viscom 2L/month
Working in reputed Co. Affulent Family with Good Net Worth. Seeking well educated BRIDE with similar background below 26 years,
Contact:
90942 02942 / 93821 90013

Hindu / Devendrakula Velalar (Pallan) 28M / 175CM / B.E, PGDM / Working in Bangalore / 11L PA seeks Employed Tamil Bride Phone : 9444450238 / 9840356343

SC Hindu 1986 Revathi Meenam Manager Bank. Contact: 9385842167

Gavara Naidu, 28, M.E. Chennai, Own Business, Own House, Subsect No Bar. Ph: 9841097110

TAMIL

Nellai Saiva Pillai 29/175/1994/ 18L MNBank in Chennai, seeks beautiful IT Girl same / sub caste Contact: 9445868954.

✔ **NRI Divorced** Hindu Pillai BE M.S, 81 born, poosam 5'7, looking for suitable Bride. Subsects no bar. Contact : 9894576770.

BRAHMIN AGE 55 Widower, Seeks Brahmin Bride below 54yrs old, Unmarried, Widow, Divorcee ok. – 93845 86456

TELUGU

BRIDE WANTED Rich Kamma Naidu, 31yrs,CA,Own firm in Chennai ,Well Educated family. 9710093999/ 9710091999

NAIDU 32 B.Tech IT PGDM HR Chennai Seeks Naidu(Any) Bride Well educated & employed Cell: 9444753417

Naidu 28/175, BE,MS, PR.Mgr. Walmart, USA, 200000 USD PA Affulent family CNB, 9043991629, 9043987029

TELUGU IYER Age 32 Thiruvonam-4 Maths Teacher 5 Lac P.A Working in Coimbatore seeks Qualified Girl Caste no Bar, Prefer Veg. CT: 9943443509.

Balija Naidu 30yrs M.Tech,Working in Medtronic Hyderabad, 16.5L PA seeks Educated, Gd looking Bride from same caste, age 24-27yrs. Ct: 98405 65046

NRI Telugu Hindu Australian Rajaka 34 yrs, seeking any south Indian Girl, preferably Keralite or Tamilian CNB. Ph / Wp:+61 498081108

URDU

27 YRS / Ht.5.10, Affluent, Well Settled Business Family & Landlords Seeks Well Settled, Affluent, Well to do Family, Bride for their Son. Mail: syedabs@yahoo.in Ct.7845512232

BRIDE WANTED
Urdu Muslim, Affluent, Well settled hotelier family in Chennai Seeks affluent, well-to-do, self employed / entrepreneur bride for their son 35 years / 180 cm
CONTACT
hotelmars@yahoo.com 9884079899

MARRIAGE BUREAU

US, UK,EUROPE All Caste Religion, 1st Marriage,Remarriage.Ct:8248757840

SITUATIONS VACANT

TECHNICAL

WANTED MECHANICAL Engineer, Electrical Engineer for Aerial Platform in Chennai Ct.9940660455 / 9940064858

BUSINESS OFFERS

BUSINESS FOR SALE

ELECTRIC SCOOTER Manufacturing Plant Sale. 4.5 Crores. 9445376065

8 MW Solar Power Plant Sale. Telangana PPA 7RS/UNIT. 60 Crores 9445376065

FINANCE

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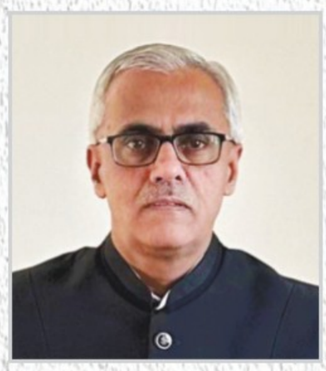
May 19th Sunday 2024

11.00 AM - 12.00 PM

SRI. PRAKASH YADWADKAR
Vice Principal
NTTF

12.00 PM - 1.00 PM



Dr. K.N. SUBRAMANAYA
Principal
RV Engineering College

May - 18th & 19th, 2024
Saturday & Sunday
9 AM - 6 PM

National College Grounds
Shankarapuram, Basavanagudi
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For More Details Contact: Sadashiv - 63639 33258, Ganesh - 96631 93660

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*Source: Average Combined Circulation for All Edition ABC Jan-Dec. 2023

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A BG-BGE

Kathakali to take the AI route to the minds of art lovers

Hiran Unnikrishnan
KOTTAYAM

While the creative prowess of artificial intelligence (AI) is not received so ecstatically by some artists, a collaboration of artists and programmers in Kerala are now crafting a machine language to foster a deeper appreciation for Kerala's classical art Kathakali.

The project, initiated by the Indian Institute of Information Technology in Kottayam in collaboration with Kerala Kalamandalam, Thrissur, aims at developing an AI-enabled tool capable of providing semantic interpretations of the art form.

As part of it, the researchers are now encoding the 24 fundamental *mudras* upon which the dance-drama tradition is anchored into a computer and subjecting it to statistical analysis. The project is led by Nandini Warrier, an Assistant Professor with the IIIT.

Manu Madhavan, one of the researchers driving the project, describes it as a significant step towards making the art form more accessible to audiences.

The *mudras*, capable of being performed with a single hand or both hands, convey nuanced meanings that can vary depending on the context of a performance.

A collaboration of artists and programmers are now crafting a machine language to foster a deeper appreciation of Kathakali.

"We have already completed the identification of the *mudras* using images obtained from Kalamandalam and are currently gathering short videos to further enrich the dataset. In the final phase, the system will begin generating interpretations in different languages in real time and provide the output as subtitles," Mr. Madhavan said. When a performance is on, the subtitles would be projected on a screen in the vicinity.

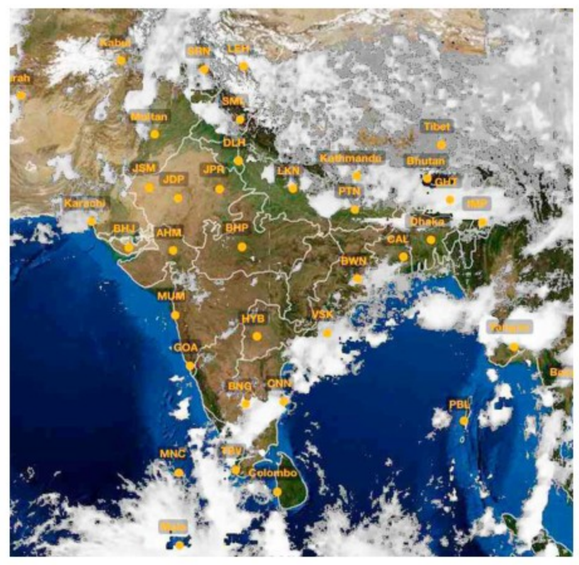
The project is significant in its role of promoting Kathakali among foreign visitors. Additionally, Kathakali masters may make use of it in training young artists, he added.

Deeper understanding

Arun Warrier, an Assistant Professor of Kathakali at Kalamandalam University, who is involved in the project, highlights that understanding Kathakali, which involves intricate gestures using hands, face, and the entire body, has been a distinctly human pursuit till now. Beginners often rely on repeated viewings of performances and guidance from experts to refine their appreciation skills. "Beyond just the narrative, the subtleties of a Kathakali performance are largely left to the viewer's perception, and sometimes, details may be lost, leading to gaps in understanding. If engaging with AI can aid in attaining a deeper understanding of a performance, why not embrace it," he asked.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Sunday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Assam, Meghalaya, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, coastal Karnataka, Kerala, Mahe and Lakshadweep. Heat wave/severe heat wave conditions likely to prevail in many parts over Punjab, Delhi; in isolated pockets over Gujarat, Uttarakhand, Bihar and Jharkhand

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	38	28.8	22.6	Kozhikode	56	35.8	25.6
Ahmedabad	—	44.5	30.8	Kurnool	34	36.0	24.8
Aizawl	0.9	26.0	23.3	Lucknow	—	44.2	27.4
Allahabad	—	45.4	31.0	Madurai	—	35.3	24.6
Bengaluru	—	29.3	22.0	Mangaluru	—	32.4	25.1
Bhopal	—	41.8	28.8	Mumbai	—	34.9	29.0
Bhubaneswar	—	39.2	28.1	Mysuru	—	31.8	—
Chandigarh	—	44.8	27.5	New Delhi	—	43.7	27.1
Chennai	—	35.7	25.7	Patna	—	42.7	30.5
Coimbatore	30.5	33.7	23.6	Port Blair	—	34.0	27.2
Dehradun	—	41.0	23.9	Puducherry	—	34.4	26.4
Gangtok	2	22.5	17.9	Pune	1.5	39.7	25.9
Goa	—	35.1	27.0	Raipur	—	37.6	27.1
Guwahati	3	32.0	24.1	Ranchi	—	32.3	26.5
Hubballi	—	34.0	25.0	Shillong	6	25.1	15.5
Hyderabad	—	32.8	24.5	Shimla	—	33.5	21.2
Imphal	9	26.1	20.5	Srinagar	—	29.4	14.5
Jaipur	—	44.4	20.9	Thiruvananthapuram	19	32.2	24.7
Kochi	—	32.6	26.2	Tiruchi	—	35.1	26.0
Kohima	2	26.5	17.2	Vijayawada	2	32.2	26.6
Kolkata	—	39.6	29.6	Visakhapatnam	0.4	35.2	28.0

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing — **Yesterday**

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.23	.46	.50	...147	...139	
Bengaluru	.15	.22	.77	36	46	
Chennai	...5	7	106	23	23	
Delhi	.33	172	.24	...342	...382	
Hyderabad	...4	..25	.46	36	...115	
Kolkata	.10	.22	.22	53	55	
Lucknow	...7	.65	.25	...254	...202	
Mumbai	...9	.53	.32	...214	...275	
Pune	..—	.36	.50	...113	...109	
Visakhapatnam	.11	.31	.12	19	45	

Air Quality Code: Poor · Moderate · Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

SIT launches probe into poll-related violence in A.P.

Rajulapudi Srinivas
VIJAYAWADA

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) on Saturday began investigation into the major incidents of violence that occurred in a few districts of Andhra Pradesh on the polling day and the following days, disturbing the law and order situation in the State.

A couple of days ago, Chief Secretary K.S. Jawahar Reddy and Director General of Police Harish Kumar Gupta met Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar in New Delhi and explained about the violence that took place in the State.

The EC referred to the violent incidents reported in Palnadu, Anantapur and Tirupati districts. It also mentioned the incidents of assault, damaging property and campaign vehicles, and stone-pelting before the elections in Chittoor, Guntur, Annamayya and Nandyal districts.

The SIT, headed by Inspector General of Police Vineet Brijlal, will not only probe the incidents of violence and oversee the cases filed on the incidents but also make necessary recommendations to register fresh FIRs. Various teams of SIT reached the violence-hit districts and started their operations.

'PM's hatred campaigns have failed'

Modi has unleashed an imaginative hatred campaign and a bundle of lies. It is the BJP that made use of YouTubers such as Manish Kashyap to serve their agenda and spread fake news: Stalin

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has accused leaders of south India of insulting the people of Uttar Pradesh and *sanatana dharma* because his "communal hatred campaigns" have failed to favour the BJP this election, Chief Minister M.K. Stalin said in a statement on Saturday.

M.K. Stalin

He was responding to Mr. Modi's alleged speech in Uttar Pradesh wherein the PM had criticised the Congress and Samajwadi Party for seeking votes in the northern State, while remaining "silent when their partners use abusive language against the people of U.P. and *sanatana dharma*".

"Mr. Modi is frustrated as his hatred campaigns have failed...," he added.

The Chief Minister further said, "Since he had nothing to boast about the achievements of the 10-year rule of his government, he had resorted to denigrating the welfare schemes of the States ruled by Opposition parties," Mr. Stalin added.

"Mr. Modi has unleashed an imaginative hatred campaign and a bundle of lies. It is the BJP that has made use of YouTubers such as Manish Kashyap to serve their agenda and spread fake news that migrant workers were being attacked," Mr. Stalin said in a statement.

Mr. Stalin said while the free bus travel for women in Tamil Nadu benefitted them in various ways, the Prime Minister had come out with a strange argument that the scheme had affected the Metro Rail service. "Mr. Modi's speech proves that he has scant regard for truth. The number of passengers who travelled in Metro Rail had increased to 9.11 crore in 2023 from 3.28 crore in 2019. The Prime Minister who has failed to release funds for the second phase of the Metro Rail project, as earlier agreed upon, has chosen to criticise the free bus travel. Since he subscribed to the right-wing and retrograde ideology of the RSS, he fears schemes that promote the development of women," Mr. Stalin alleged.

Mr. Modi has resorted to hatred campaigns on a daily basis since was afraid of the ground gained by the INDIA Bloc and its victory in the Lok Sabha polls.

Mr. Stalin said the divisive dream of the BJP will never become a reality.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Tender Notice No: SHAHPUR-WADI_EI_/ 2024-25-01 Dated : 13.05.2024.
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders for the following work.

Name of the Work	Approx. Value
Provision of Electronic Interlocking System including Outdoor Signalling Works at Shahpur, Sirwal, Biral Buzurg and Narboli Stations in connection with New line between Gadag - Wadi section of Hubballi Division of South Western Railway.	Rs. 18,02,50,535.81

Last date for submission of bids: **Upto 15:00 Hrs on 10-06-2024**
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Deputy Chief Signal & Telecom Engineer / Construction, Hubballi
PUB/85/AAS/PRB/SWR/2024-25
South Western Railway - SWR · SWRRLY · SWRRLY

PUBLIC NOTICE
My clients have entered into an Agreement of sale to purchase immovable property described in the schedule hereunder from **(1) Sri. B.S.RAJIV,** residing at No.81, Out house, Binny Layout, Hampinagar, Bangalore -560104. **(2) Smt. B.S. SAVITHA RAMESH, (3) G.R.BHARGAV** and **(4) G.R.SAVRABH,** Vendors at Sl No. 2 to 4 are residing at at No. 2420, LIG, SAVRABHA, 4th" C" Main, 3rd Phase, Yelahanka New Town, Bangalore North Taluk, Bangalore -560064.
Vendor No.1 to 4 have represented to my clients that father of vendor No.1,2 and Maternal Grand Father of Vendor No. 3 and 4, Sri. B.V.Subramanya Gupta, alias B.V.Subramanyam Gupta was the absolute owner of residential property, morefully described in the schedule hereunder.
Vendor No. 1 to 4 have represented that B.V.Subramanya Gupta alias B.V.Subramanyam Gupta, purchased Site bearing No. 81, in the layout formed by Binny Employees Co-operative Housing Society Limited in Survey Number 231 of Hosahalli Village. vide sale deed dated 23.03.1972, Registered as Document No.4670 in Volume No.336 of Book -1, at Pages 143-146 in the office of Sub-Registrar, Srirampuram, Bangalore, later on put up construction.
Vendor No. 1 to 4 have represented that wife of B.V.Subramanya Gupta alias B.V.Subramanyam Gupta, Smt. Padmavathi predeceased him and that B.V.Subramanya Gupta alias B.V.Subramanyam Gupta, has bequeathed the schedule property in their favour by executing Will dated 21.12.2015, which is registered as Document No. VJN-3-00272-2015-16, stored in C.D.No. VJND131, in the office of Sub-Registrar, Vijayanagar, Bangalore.
B.V.Subramanya Gupta alias B.V. Subramanyam Gupta died on 26/10/2019. Vendor No. 1 to 4 have represented that they are the absolute owners of the schedule property and that other than them no other person has any kind of right over the Schedule property.
Any person/s, institution, Banks, Societies, Financial Institutions or whomsoever having any claim, right, objections of whatsoever nature for the sale of the schedule property by the oferesaid persons in favour of my client, shall with all concerned documents ,lodge their claims **within Ten Days** of publication of this Notice, failing which it shall be deemed that none have any claim against the schedule property. No claims will be considered thereafter and the sale transaction shall be completed.
SCHEDULE PROPERTY
All that piece and parcel of residential immovable property bearing Site No. 81, in the Layout formed by Binny Employees Co-operative Housing Society Limited in land bearing Sy. No.231 of Hosahalli Village, Bangalore North Taluk, bearing P.I.D.No.34-65-81, New P.I.D. No. 124-W0150-9, DiGi7 149CHJO, now within the limits of old ward No. 34, New Ward No.124 of B.B.M.P. measuring East to West 30 (Thirty) feet and North to South 45½ (Forty Five and Half) feet, totally measuring 1365 (One Thousand Three Hundred and Sixty Five) Square Feet, including the open spaces, together with R.C.C. dilapidated structure of 1050 (One Thousand and Fifty) Square Feet in the Ground Floor, bounded on the
East by: Site/Property No.80, sold to Sreerama, now Private Property.
West by: Site/ Property No.82 sold to Prathapan, now Private Property.
North by: Road, and **South by:** Site / Property No.91.
Address Prakash Rao Jadav Advocate, No.10, 6th Main Road, Vasanthnagar, Bangalore -560052 Mb: 9844233634

PUBLIC NOTICE
General public are hereby informed that, our client **Mrs.Nidhi Bansal** has lost the original Rectification deed dated 06-02-2018, registered on 08-02-2018, registered as document No.5185/2017-18, in respect of property bearing Unit No.B of building known as 'Soul Space Paradigm', Situated at **Munnekolalu Village, Varthur Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk,** while taking Xerox at Sampangirama Nagar, Bangalore. If anybody found the said document please contact this Nos. **9844155041 and 9110600292**
V.S.Rai & Associates, LAW FIRM
No.23,"Venkatadri" 6th Main,
5th Cross, S.R.Nagar, Bangalore-27.
Mob : 98441 55041, 9620579310

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Medical Department of Mysuru Division, South Western Railway, Mysuru is looking for Empanelment of Private Hospital with Divisional Railway Hospital for Treatment of Railway beneficiaries at prevailing CGHS Bengaluru rates.
Interested Private hospital contact the undersigned address at the earliest.
Office of Chief Medical Superintendent, Divisional Railway Hospital, Yadava Giri, Mysuru - 570020
Chief Medical Superintendent
Mysuru
PUB/91/AAS/PRB/SWR/2024-25
South Western Railway - SWR · SWRRLY · SWRRLY

PUBLIC NOTICE
My clients Sri. Patric Tonni, S/o. Sri. Helen Mary & his wife Smt. Dayana Mary .A have intending to purchase of the schedule property mentioned hereunder for a valuable consideration with its owner Smt. K. Krishnaveni, W/o. Sri. K. Srinivasulu, Residing at H. No. 3, Sri Bhuvaneswari Nilaya, 15th Cross, Ramaswamy Layout, Lakkasandra, Bangalore- 560030.
If any persons, banks, financial institutions etc., having any claims, right, title and interest whatsoever over the schedule property may forward their objections to the undersigned in writing with supporting documents of your such claims, within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. Failing which it will be deemed that there are no claims, right, title and interest by anybody and my clients will proceed for completion of sale transaction and thereafter no claims will be considered.
SCHEDULE
Approved residential Plot bearing No. 159, Property PID No.150200102800 923490, Village Panchyathi khatha No. 119/159 measuring East to West 9.14 Metres. & North to South 12.19 Metres. total measuring 111.48 Sq. Metres. formed in converted land bearing Sy. No. 313, vide conversion order No. ALN (AJ) SR170/2007-08, dated 17-10-2008, and Layout Approval No. APA/LAO/96/2008-09 dated 20-08-2014, situated at Haragadde Village, Jigani Hobli, Anekal Taluk, and bounded on the : East by : Road, West by : Site No.16, North by : Plot No. 158, South by : Plot No. 160.
MANJUNATHA & ASSOCIATES
K. N. MANJUNATHA CHARY, ROOPA. B, & B.N. JAGADISH KUMAR, Advocates, # 96, 1st Floor, 1st Main, 4th Cross, Maruthi Nagar, Madiwala, Bangalore- 68, Mob: 9845965626, 7406090832
Bangalore, Date : 18-05-2024

BENGALURU SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT LIMITED
Office of the Deputy General Manager-2(BSWML), 1st Floor, UNI Building, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanth Nagar, Bengaluru – 560 052
No. DGM-2/(BSWML)/Corr- 01/24-25 **Date:18.05.2024**
CORRIGENDUM-1
Sub: **Updation of Calendar of Events for Tender Notification.**
Ref: **(1) This office Tender Notification No:DGM-2/BSWML /TEND/01/23-24, Dated: 15.03.2024.**
2) Secretariat of the Election Commission of India letter No:437/KT- HP/2024, Dated: 16.05.2024
As per the above subject and references, the calendar of events for the above tender notification is updated with reference(2); The Change in the Calendar of Events is as shown in below table.

Sl No		As per tender notification	Updated dates please read as
1	Last date and time for uploading qualification documents	On 15.04.2024 up-to 16:00 hrs.	**On 06.06.2024 up-to 16:00 hrs.**
2	Pre bid meeting date and time	On 27.03.2024 upto15:00 hrs.	**On 27.05.2024 up-to 15:00 hrs.**
3	Opening of tender date and time	On 16.04.2024 up-to 16:30 hrs.	**On 07.06.2024 up-to 16:30 hrs.**

For Further details visit GOK kpp portal Website **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in**
Sd/-
Deputy General Manager-2 BSWML
DIPR/CP/JA/74/2024-25

PUBLIC NOTICE
The General public is hereby informed that my client is intending to purchase the below mentioned schedule of property from its Owner SRI. N. SOMASHEKAR REDDY, Son of C. Narayana Reddy, aged about 57 years, Residing at Palegar Street, Anekal Town, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Urban District.
If anybody is having any objection, claim, interest, dispute for the above intended sale transaction, he/she/they may contact the undersigned with the documentary proof substantiating his/her/their objections/claim/details of disputes/s within Seven (7) days from the date of this publication, failing which, my client will proceed to complete the sale transaction with the above onwer as if there are no third party claims/ojections/disputes in respect of the Schedule Property and thereafter no claim/objections/disputes will be entertained..
SCHEDULE PROPERTY
Item No.1:
All the piece and parcel of the Residentially converted land bearing Survey Number 508/1 (Old Survey Number 508), measuring 27 Guntas, situated at Marasur Village, Kasaba Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Urban District, duly converted from agricultural to non-agricultural Residential purpose on 12.02.2013, vide Official memorandum bearing No. ALN (A) (K & A) S.R/9/2006-07, issued by the Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore District and bounded on;
East by : Survey Number 508/2; West by : Survey Number 509;
North by : Survey Number 507; South by : Survey Number 508/4
Item No.2:
All the piece and parcel of the Residentially converted land bearing Survey Number 508/3 Old Survey Number 508), measuring 19 Guntas, situated at Marasur Village, Kasaba Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Urban District, duly converted from agricultural to non-agricultural Residential purpose on 12.02.2013, vide Official memorandum bearing No. ALN (A) (K & A) S.R/12/2006-07, issued by the Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore District and bounded on;
East by : Survey Number 505; West by : Survey Number 508/2;
North by : Survey Number 505; South by : Survey Number 508/4
Item No.3:
All the piece and parcel of the Residentially converted land bearing Survey Number 509/1 (Old Survey Number 509), measuring 01 Acre 03 Guntas, situated at Marasur Village, Kasaba Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Urban District, duly converted from agricultural to non-agricultural Residential purpose on 12.02.2013, vide Official memorandum bearing No. ALN (A) (K & A) S.R/10/2006-07, issued by the Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore District and bounded on;
East by : Survey Number 509/2; West by : Survey Number 510 & 512;
North by : Survey Number 507; South by : Survey Number 510 & 509/3
Item No.4:
All the piece and parcel of the Residentially converted land bearing Survey Number 509/2 (Old Survey Number 509), measuring 14 Guntas, situated at Marasur Village, Kasaba Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Urban District, duly converted from agricultural to non-agricultural Residential purpose on 12.02.2013, vide Official memorandum bearing No. ALN (A) (K & A) S.R/9/2006-07, issued by the Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore District and bounded on;
East by : Survey Number 508; West by : Survey Number 509/1;
North by : Survey Number 507; South by : Survey Number 509/3.
Sd/-
Dated: 19.05.2024
Place: Bengaluru
S. NAGATHRIJALA, M.B.A,L.L.B, **Advocate,** #2566, 1st Floor, 13th Cross Rd, 1st Sector, HSR Layout, Bengaluru, Karnataka 560102
PH: +91-9113853699

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Cell: 90801 83299

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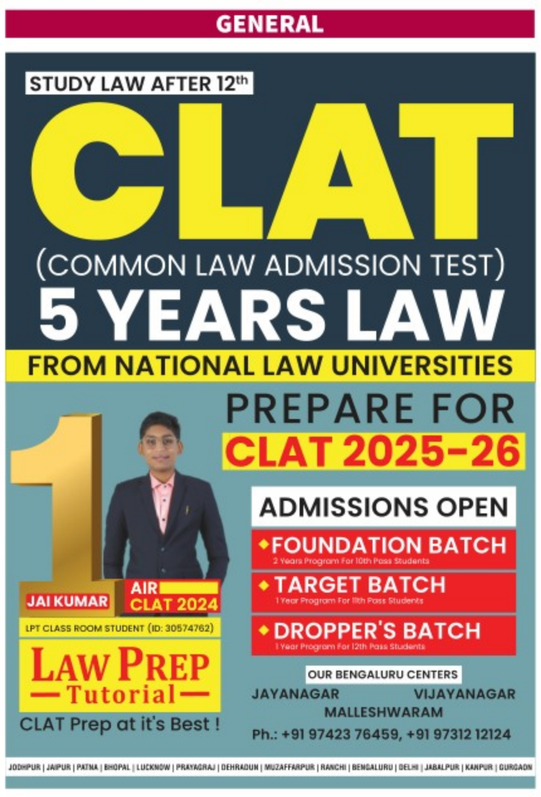
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A BG-BGE

From Page One

Campaign ends, all set for key contests tomorrow

Uttar Pradesh, which sends the largest number of MPs to Parliament, will see 14 seats voting in the fifth phase with the fate of five Union Ministers at stake. These seats include Congress pocket boroughs of Rae Bareli and Amethi. Faizabad, which includes Ayodhya, the nerve centre of the BJP's Hindutva politics will also vote in this phase.

All the seats in Mumbai are also going to polls in this phase.

Trinamool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee ruffled some feathers in the INDIA bloc when she said her party would provide only outside support to the group if it forms the government though she later softened her stand.

With the fifth phase, the polling process in 25 States and Union Territories will end. The next two phases will be on May 25 and June 1.

An address in India, minted at post office

"I had the file with all the documents. This includes an eligibility certificate issued by the priest of Shiv Mandir near our refugee colony. The officials interviewed me for around 40 minutes, asked me detailed questions but eventually turned down my application. They have asked me to apply again as an affidavit to be attested by a notary was missing," said Mr. Lal.

Though the legislation was brought in for undocumented migrants, the Rules specify several documents that are to be uploaded on the portal including a document issued by a government authority in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh. While applications are pouring in from Rajasthan, Gujarat, Haryana and Delhi where Pakistani Hindus who entered India legally are concentrated, there is no confirmation about people applying for citizenship under CAA in West Bengal and Assam. Matuas and Namasudras who fled Bangladesh fearing religious persecution and settled in West Bengal, and Bengali Hindus, excluded from Assam's National Register of Citizens (NRC) in 2015, are the other intended beneficiaries.

At least 14 people from Mr. Lal's neighbourhood at Majnu Ka Tila were conferred citizenship on May 15 by Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla. Amar Nath Advani, 44, who sells mobile phone covers for a living near Majnu Ka Tila was at the post office with five other family members. "The officials interviewed us for three hours. They asked me about my parents, I showed them their death certificates. They also wanted to see the identity documents of my parents. They asked several questions to each family member," said Mr. Advani. He said he was grateful to the Narendra Modi government for having implemented the CAA as before this he had never applied for citizenship under the Citizenship Act, 1955.

"... CAA makes it easy for us. This time I am hopeful that after an enquiry is done by a security official, I will get citizenship soon," he said.

In a first, the government has entrusted officials from the Census, postal department, railways and National Informatics Centre to scrutinise and verify the documents after they are submitted online. An empowered committee under the Directorate of Census is the final authority to grant citizenship. The Senior Superintendent or Superintendent of Post heads the district-level committee where an official not below the rank of Naib Tehsildar or equivalent from the office of District Collector representing the State government is only an invitee.

Kejriwal's aide Bibhav Kumar held in case of alleged assault

Arrest sparks a war of words; AAP leader Atishi asks if Delhi Police are being used as 'political weapon' by the BJP in its conspiracy against the Opposition; BJP chief J.P. Nadda says AAP is built on a foundation of lies and has no credibility

Alisha Dutta
Ishita Mishra
NEW DELHI

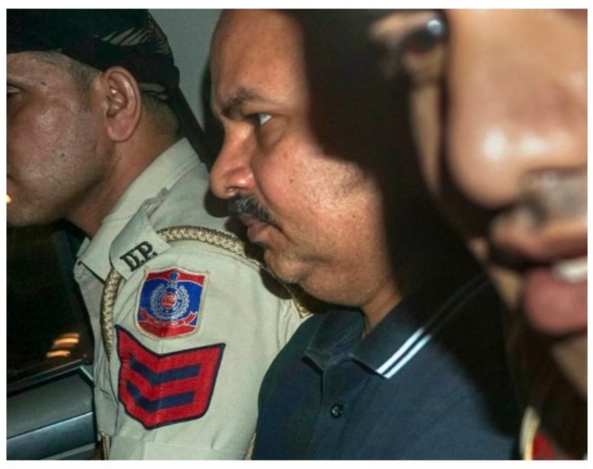
The Delhi Police on Saturday arrested Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's aide Bibhav Kumar in connection with a case of alleged assault on Swati Maliwal, Rajya Sabha member of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP).

Hours before his arrest, a court dismissed the anticipatory bail plea filed by Mr. Kumar, who has lodged a complaint against Ms. Maliwal for gaining "unauthorised entry" into the Chief Minister's residence and verbally abusing him.

When Mr. Kumar was produced in the Tis Hazari court around 9.30 p.m., the police sought seven days' remand.

According to agencies, Additional Public Prosecutor Atul Srivastava, representing the Delhi Police, said that the pen drive in which the CCTV footage of the Chief Minister's residence was given to the police was found to be blank.

Mr. Kumar's counsel told the court that the Delhi Police were distorting facts.



Legal bind: Bibhav Kumar being taken to custody by Delhi Police in the case of alleged assault, in New Delhi on Saturday. PTI

The arrest has sparked a war of words between the AAP and the BJP in the national capital as the former termed the police action "part of the BJP's conspiracy". The BJP, on the other hand, said the AAP had "minus credibility".

As AAP leaders posted comments on social media questioning the complaint of Ms. Maliwal, the MP posted on the social media platform X that she had received information that the CCTV footage from the residence of the Chief Minister was being tampered with.

Meanwhile, the medico-legal report accessed by *The Hindu* showed that Ms. Maliwal had received injuries in the left leg and above her right cheekbone.

Sanjeev Nasiar, president of the AAP's State legal cell, said Mr. Kumar had been arrested without being given a copy of the FIR. "We have filed an application in the court saying that we have not yet received a copy of the FIR. We wanted to go inside (Civil Lines police station) but we are being stopped," he said.

Earlier in the day, AAP leader Atishi had accused the BJP of running an operation wherein cases were filed against leaders of Opposition parties, and then they were "blackmailed" or forced to become turncoats.

CCTV footage

On Saturday, the AAP's official handle on X posted a clip of CCTV footage showing Ms. Maliwal exiting the Chief Minister's residence.

Taking a dig at Ms. Maliwal's allegations that she was brutally attacked, Ms. Atishi said that the MP was seen in the footage not "quivering in pain", "limping", or with any visible signs of injuries .

Ms. Atishi asked why Ms. Maliwal had not lodged the official complaint on the day of the incident and why she did not go for a medical examination that day. Ms. Atishi alleged that Ms. Maliwal was the "face of the conspiracy" hatched by the top leaders of the BJP, to tarnish the Chief Minister's reputation. She added that the BJP was using a case against Ms. Maliwal filed by the Anti-Corruption Bureau regarding "illegal" recruitment of contractual employees, to coerce her to carry out their agenda.

She also demanded to know why the Delhi Police refused to give a copy of the FIR to the Tis Hazari court or the accused, despite "the media receiving copies of the FIR from BJP leaders". She asked if the Delhi Police were being used as a "political weapon".

In a counter, BJP national president J.P. Nadda said that the Kejriwal-led party had "minus credibility". "AAP is built on a foundation of lies... its credibility is not zero, it has 'minus' credibility," Mr. Nadda said. He said that this incident had "exposed" Mr. Kejriwal, the Aam Aadmi Party's national convener, before the people of Delhi and the country.

Mr. Nadda posed the question as to why Mr. Kejriwal passed the mic on Thursday when he was asked about the issue.

FIR against 3 officials of Raj Bhavan in West Bengal

Press Trust of India
KOLKATA

A case was lodged against three officials of the Raj Bhavan here for allegedly wrongfully restraining the woman who accused West Bengal Governor C.V. Ananda Bose of molesting her, the Kolkata police said on Saturday.

The FIR against the three officials was lodged at the Hare Street police station after the woman, a contractual employee of the Raj Bhavan, recorded her statement before a Magistrate in the molestation case, a police officer said.

On May 2, the woman had alleged molestation by the Governor following which the Kolkata Police started an investigation.

Earlier a statement from Raj Bhavan, Kolkata said: "It is clear that in view of Article 361 (2) and (3) of the Constitution of India, the State police cannot act in any manner whatsoever to inquire/investigate/set in motion any kind of proceedings against the hon'ble governor." It added that no criminal proceedings shall be instituted or continued against the President, or the Governor of a State in any court during his or her term of office.

Terrorists open fire at tourist couple in Kashmir

The Hindu Bureau
SRINAGAR

A tourist couple from Jaipur were injured in a militant attack near the tourist destination of Pahalgam in Anantnag of south Kashmir on Saturday evening.

The police said terrorists fired at Farha and Tabrez in the Yannar area.

"The injured have been evacuated to a hospital for treatment," the police said. Security forces have cordoned off the spot.

Less than an hour later after this incident, militants shot dead a man at Hurpora in Shopian.

Preliminary reports suggested that the victim was a former sarpanch associated with the BJP.

Nine pilgrims charred to death in Haryana as bus goes up in flames

The Hindu Bureau
GURUGRAM

Nine pilgrims, one of them a 10-year-old girl, were charred to death and 20 sustained burns when a tourist bus they were travelling on caught fire on the Kundli-Manesar-Palwal Expressway at Nuh in Haryana in the early hours of Saturday.

The bus with 62 people, including 35 women and four children, was on its way to Jalandhar in Punjab from Mathura in Uttar Pradesh when it caught fire around 2 a.m. Besides the girl, the dead include five women and three men.

"Eight charred bodies were recovered from the bus, and one person died of injuries during treatment," said Narendra Bijarniya, Superintendent of Police, Nuh.

The tourist bus caught fire on the Kundli-Manesar-Palwal Expressway at Nuh in Haryana in the early hours of Saturday. PTI

A forensics team from Madhuban in Karnal was called to ascertain the cause of fire, he added.

The bus driver – charged with causing death by negligence and negligent driving under the Indian Penal Code – is on the run.

The passengers belonged to various parts of Punjab, including Hoshiarpur, Jalandhar and Mohali, and were mostly close relatives and friends who would often plan group pilgrimages.

Jalandhar resident Rakesh Kumar, 60, in his complaint to the police, said the bus caught fire near Dhulawat village while they were returning home from Vrindavan, but the driver did not stop despite being repeatedly asked by the passengers to pull over.

"When he finally stopped, the flames had engulfed the entire bus. The local people pulled out a few passengers from the bus and took them to different hospitals," said Mr. Kumar, who had hired the vehicle.

Four fire tenders were pressed into service to douse the fire.

EC issues notices to West Bengal BJP chief

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The Election Commission (EC) issued two separate showcause notices to West Bengal BJP chief Sukanta Majumdar on Saturday for his party allegedly issuing advertisements targeting the ruling Trinamool Congress.

The poll panel has sought Mr. Majumdar's explanation on why two advertisements of the BJP should not be treated as violative of the Model Code of Conduct, which is in force for the ongoing Lok Sabha polls, and its advisory to political parties.

The BJP leader has been asked to respond by 5 p.m. on May 21.

India asks students in Kyrgyzstan to stay indoors

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Embassy of India in the Central Asian Republic of Kyrgyz Republic has advised Indian students to stay indoors, amidst reports of mob attacks against students from Pakistan.

"We are in touch with our students... Our 24x7 contact number of 0555710041," the Indian embassy announced on X on Saturday. It is understood that the frenzied attacks are fuelled by social media rumours which started after a skirmish between local Kyrgyz residents and foreign students in one of the hostels for foreign students.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic in a statement blamed "destructive forces" for the videos that went viral during the weekend and said the situation is "calm and under full control."

BJP's own Pasmanda outreach in Bihar thrown off rails by Modi's campaign speeches

Abhinay Lakshman
MARHAURA/SARAN

In redirecting the BJP's campaign after the first phase of voting, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has positioned himself and his party as the only ones capable of 'rescuing' reservations from Muslims for Dalits, Adivasis and OBCs, accusing the Congress of planning to give quotas to Muslims. What has become collateral damage in the process is the BJP's own Pasmanda outreach in Bihar, which had been in the making for over eight months.

In every Pasmanda village it enters, the party's minority cell in the State is faced with voters who are both fearful and angry – fearful that the BJP will take away existing reservation for the Pasmandas under the OBC/EBC category and angry about the tone and language.

Mr. Modi had been using his speeches to allude to Muslims in his campaign speeches. "Whenever we go into the community now and mention the Prime Minister, I am asked, 'Have you heard his speeches?,'" Kamruzzama Ansari, the party's Minority Morcha State president, told *The Hindu*, as he and his team prepared for yet another day of campaigning in the Saran Lok Sabha constituency's Pasmanda villages.

Outreach efforts: The BJP's minority cell has been reaching out to the Pasmanda community for eight months now. ABHINAY LAKSHMAN

Pasmanda Muslims constitute over 72% of the Muslim population in Bihar and come under either the OBC or EBC categories. They comprise 29.9% of the Extremely Backward Classes (EBC) population in Bihar and over 12% of the State's entire population – making them an important part of the BJP's plans in the State to break the Rashtriya Janata Dal's (RJD) grip over the Muslim vote, until recently.

Caught by surprise

Mr. Ansari of Bhagalpur was appointed the Bihar Minority Morcha's State president in September last year, the first Pasmanda face to head the unit, and he hit the ground running immediately, organising recruitment drives within the community.

"We recruited over 1,800 Modi *mitras* from the Pasmanda community, organised Sneh Samvaads, and joined the cleaning drives ahead of the Ayodhya Ram Mandir inauguration," he said.

Mohammad Tahir Mansoori, the State coordinator for Bihar's minority cell, said, "The caste census data had come out showing the socio-economic status of Pasmanda Muslims, for which we could only hold past governments accountable, and this was working in our favour. Our calculations just before the first phase showed that we had made a strong base among at least 8-10% of the Muslim voters. But we did not see the Prime Minister's change in rhetoric coming."

The icons of the Pasmanda movement in Bihar, such as Ali Anwar Ansari, said they have had to temporarily set aside the main objective with which the movement had begun in the late 1990s – that of seeking representation in the power structure in proportion to their share in the population.

Neither the NDA nor the INDIA bloc has fielded a single Pasmanda candidate in the Lok Sabha election in Bihar, despite a push made by leaders in light of the data that was revealed by Bihar's caste census.

"The PM's poll rhetoric, which some would put under the category of hate speech, is uniting Muslims across castes and classes. But we know that no matter who wins, the issue of our representation has to be brought forward and with force. It has become more important now that the Bihar caste data is out showing the extent of disparities," Mr. Ali Anwar said.

Court to consider ED's chargesheet against Kejriwal, AAP

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Saturday decided that it will consider on Monday the supplementary chargesheet filed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) against Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in the Delhi excise policy case. The agency had submitted the supplementary chargesheet in the Rouse Avenue Court here. It had formally named Mr. Kejriwal and the AAP as accused in the alleged money laundering case.

Special judge Kaveri Baweja posted the matter for May 20.

The ED has filed its seventh supplementary chargesheet in the case and booked Mr. Kejriwal, the AAP's Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Singh and former Deputy Chief Minister of Delhi Manish Sisodia. The AAP chief and Mr. Singh are out on bail. Mr. Sisodia has been languishing in prison since February 2023.

This prosecution complaint filed by the ED is based on a first information report (FIR) registered by the Central Bureau of Investigation on August 17, 2022, against Mr. Sisodia and 14 others associated with the AAP and liquor manufacturers/sellers.

It alleges that the Delhi policy extended an extraordinarily high profit margin of 12% for wholesalers and almost 185% profit margin for retailers, which was subsequently withdrawn by the State.

After the CBI case, the ED filed a case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, alleging that the money earned through the excise policy was diverted through "hawala" channels to be spent on the AAP's campaign in Goa ahead of the 2022 Assembly election.

Shah has told BJP proxies to defeat us: Omar

National Conference vice-president Omar Abdullah on Saturday expressed fears that Union Home Minister Amit Shah's recent two-day visit to Kashmir was to "direct the administration and the BJP to ensure the defeat of the National Conference (NC)" in the elections to the Baramulla and Anantnag seats. "The visit to Kashmir, where the BJP has not fielded any candidate, was aimed at giving directions to the administration, the BJP and its 'B', 'C', D' and 'E' teams on how to defeat the NC," he said. He said he smelt a rat as even the reported security review meeting of Mr. Shah was not held. "Unofficially, the BJP is extending support to new political parties created after the abrogation of Article 370 [in August 2019]," he said.

NC leader Omar Abdullah addressing a rally at Budgam district on Saturday. PTI

Himanta targets Lalu at rally in Muzaffarpur

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Saturday asked RJD chief Lalu Prasad to go to Pakistan, along with his two sons, if he was interested in giving reservation to Muslims.

Mr. Sarma made the remarks while addressing a rally in Bihar's Muzaffarpur.

It was a reference to Mr. Prasad's recent statement that Muslims in the country should also get reservation. Later, he went back on his statement, saying reservation could not be given on religious grounds.

Mr. Sarma said, "I want to tell Lalu Prasad that this is new India and Muslims cannot get reservation in India. If he is so interested in giving reservation to Muslims, then he must go to Pakistan along with his two sons and give reservation over there."

> Questions for the outgoing PM: Why has PM broken his promise of legal MSP for farmers? Why do atrocities on Dalits pick up in BJP-ruled States
>
> **JAIRAM RAMESH**
> Congress leader

EC censures Trinamool leader Humayun

The Election Commission on Saturday censured Trinamool Congress leader Humayun Kabir for allegedly threatening voters and rival party workers through statements based on religious lines. Dubbing his remarks as a misconduct, the EC "strongly condemned" and censured him. PTI

> The Congress has a record of putting the Opposition in jail. [Arvind] Kejriwal is in alliance with the same people and is accusing the BJP
>
> **MOHAN YADAV**
> Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister

DISTRICT ELECTION OFFICER
SWEEP
Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation
GREATER PARTICIPATION FOR A STRONGER DEMOCRACY

The EC's Systematic Voter Education and Electoral Participation programmes were held in villages close to the LoC for the first time. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

With guns silent, 92 LoC villages upbeat ahead of Baramulla polls

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

Five years since 2019, when Jammu and Kashmir saw the highest – 3,200 – number of cross-border shelling episodes, the people of 92 villages within a 19-kilometre stretch along the Line of Control (LoC) are jubilant amid motivational and awareness programmes. In some pockets, even residents of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir could observe the special election-related events.

Officials said that it was for the first time that the Election Commission's Systematic Voter Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) programmes were held in villages close to the LoC. "We started voter awareness programmes from the first polling station of India, Seemari, in Kupwara's Karnah. The first-time voters of India's first polling station were engaged. A Tiranga rally of schoolchildren was held to showcase the unwavering spirit of Indian democracy. Let's stand together on May 20 as Seemari leads the way," Sapna Kotwal, nodal officer, told *The Hindu*.

Peaceful atmosphere

Singer Kabul Bukhari also created a buzz in Karnah with even the residents on the other side of the divide hitting the banks of the Neelam river to get a glimpse of the electioneering activities, the officials said. "It was a rare experience. Electioneering in a very peaceful atmosphere. It's going to make a difference in voter turnout in areas close to the LoC," Nazir Khan, a resident, said.

Under the SVEEP, most villages close to the LoC were covered for the first time in 30 years. It was only possible because of the strict adherence to the ceasefire agreement between India and Pakistan since February 2020 in J&K.

There are 62 villages in Baramulla district, three in Kupwara and 27 in Bandipora located between 2 km to 19 km of the LoC in the Baramulla Lok Sabha constituency. India and Pakistan share a 776-km LoC, mostly through the three districts in the Kashmir Valley.

Even in the Gurez valley of Bandipora, which remained a target of cross-border shelling even in the months of September and November in 2020, peace has added to voters' enthusiasm. "The fear that Pakistan could resort to shelling has gone down considerably in the past four years. People even move late in the evening," Khalid Gurezi, a resident of Izmarg, said.

P.K. Pole, Chief Electoral Officer, J&K, fanned out multiple teams in the Tulail valley of Gurez this month "to ensure greater participation of voters in the upcoming election". Local voters were engaged in events such as a tug-of-war and singing and dance competitions to enhance public participation in the polling day scheduled on May 20, an official said.

Ms. Kotwal said pink polling stations were also set up in Gurez "as we expect women in large numbers to participate in the polls".

Scores of enthusiastic voters conveyed their eagerness to participate in activities in the picturesque Keran area on Zero Line in Kupwara, an official said on Saturday.

Divided Ladakh headed for a high-altitude cliffhanger

The cold desert, bitterly divided on religious and regional lines but united in the demand for statehood, is witnessing a triangular fight among the BJP, the Indian National Developmental, Inclusive Alliance and an Independent candidate

OVERVIEW

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

Located over 11,000 feet above the sea level, the cold desert of Ladakh is all set to vote on Monday after a heated high-altitude electoral battle. Bitterly divided on religious and regional lines, the Ladakh Lok Sabha constituency will witness a triangular fight – a cliffhanger – among the BJP, the Indian National Developmental, Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) and an Independent candidate.

Till the last date of filing of nominations, the mountains witnessed political drama and suspense. The BJP dropped its incumbent MP and firebrand leader, Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, and nominated Tashi Gyalson as its candidate. The rumblings within the party continued till the high command intervened and prevailed.

On the other hand, the INDIA bloc could not keep its flock together. Several top leaders of the Congress and the National Conference (NC), a member of the bloc, rebelled against the grand old party's decision to field Tsering Namgyal as its candidate.

So Haji Hanifa Jan, an influential NC leader from Kargil, entered the fray as an Independent.

Getting set: Polling personnel walking towards their designated vehicles at a distribution centre on Saturday, ahead of Monday's election in Ladakh. REUTERS

"We all are worried about the future of Ladakh. Leh and Kargil have been fighting together for its rights. I want to take our four-point agenda to Parliament and agitate for it, inside and outside the House," Mr. Jan said.

'A different election'

Mr. Jan, in whose favour two Muslim candidates withdrew their nominations, discounts any religious divide. "Ladakh is witnessing a different election, not on regional or religious lines. It's an issue-based election," he said.

Ladakh witnessed multiple street agitations after it was carved out from the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir into an Union Territory in 2019. The umbrella organisations, Leh Apex Body (LAB) and Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA), came into being and launched agitations to press the Centre to grant the region Statehood, include it in the Sixth Schedule, set up a local recruitment agency, and grant an additional Lok Sabha seat. These demands transcend regional and religious lines. For the first time, there is growing disillusionment in the Ladakh Buddhist Association (LBA), a religious body, on extending support to the BJP. Though the Centre engaged Ladakh's representatives, it did not concede any major demand.

With Buddhists drifting away from the BJP, the party's top campaigner, Union Minister Kiren Rijiju, in Ladakh chose his words carefully during campaigning. "Have faith in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's guarantee. All your demands will be met in the next five years. A road map has been prepared," the Union Minister said.

Without taking an antagonistic position, the Union Minister reached out to the LAB and KDA. "Dialogue is the way forward," he said. It remains to be seen how many Buddhists were won over by the poll narrative of the BJP.

The party candidate was seen visiting monasteries and masjids to win over voters.

Silent on Statehood

The Congress, in its manifesto, has extended support to the demand for Sixth Schedule inclusion, but remained silent on Statehood. It is banking on Muslim votes, which will be split between the party and Kargil-based Independent candidates.

Ladakh has always witnessed polarisation on regional and religious grounds. Each of the two districts, Leh and Kargil, has its own political and religious class, which determine the political course. In Kargil, the voting pattern among Shias is determined by the Imam Khomeini Memorial Trust and the Islamia School, Kargil. In Leh, the Ladakh Buddhist Association holds sway among Buddhists.

There are around 1.82 lakh voters spread over an area of 59,000 sq. km. The voter density can be understood from the fact that Delhi is spread over 1,483 sq. km only but has 14.8 lakh voters. The population may be thin but the layers of politics are only akin to the changing colours of the mountains in the region.

SAD raises 'pro-Punjab', 'Panthic' pitch in manifesto

The Hindu Bureau
CHANDIGARH

The Shiromani Akali Dal released its manifesto for the Lok Sabha election on Saturday, making a "Panthic" (Sikh) and "pro-Punjab" pitch, and emphasising a democratic and federal structure with political and fiscal autonomy for the State.

SAD president Sukhir Singh Badal released the manifesto. He said that on getting the people's mandate, the party would introduce a law to ensure that jobs in Punjab would be reserved for Punjabi youth only.

The manifesto makes a commitment to renew the fight for the inclusion of Chandigarh and other Punjabi-speaking areas left out of the State. Mr. Badal said the party will use its mandate to seek the transfer of Kartarpur Sahib from Pakistan to India through mutual land exchange.

It talks about the need to safeguard the Constitution. "Secular and democratic values have come under stress in recent years. Minorities and other exploited sections are being systematically targeted on communal grounds. This needs to stop and SAD will treat this as a priority," he said.

He said the party backs farmers and would bring a legal "guarantee for assured marketing of farmers' produce at MSP and will strive to get a one-time loan waiver for farmers".

BJP targets Perfect 10 in Haryana, Congress eyes revival

Vikas Vasudeva
CHANDIGARH

As Haryana goes to the polls on May 25, the Bharatiya Janata Party is toiling to repeat its stellar 2019 performance when it swept all the 10 Lok Sabha seats, while its direct rival, Congress, is facing a battle to revive itself in the State.

The Congress, after the drubbing in 2019, is contesting this election in a seat-sharing arrangement with the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), its INDIA bloc partner. The AAP is contesting just one seat – Kurukshetra – while the Congress fights from the remaining nine. The BJP is contesting all 10.

The Jannayak Janta Party (JJP), the former coalition partner of the BJP, and the Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) are also in the fray, but since both these parties draw support largely from the agrarian class – primarily the Jat community – they appear to be competing among themselves to keep their vote bank intact and stay relevant.

The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) has also fielded candidates.

Looking for a clean sweep: Prime Minister Narendra Modi being garlanded by supporters during a meet in Sonipat on Saturday. ANI

The 10 Lok Sabha constituencies in the State will go to the polls on May 25

The BJP government in the State recently witnessed turmoil after three Independent MLAs withdrew their support to the government, leaving it precariously placed in the Assembly, even as BJP leaders continue to assert that their government is "not under threat".

Nevertheless, this has given the Opposition ammunition to target the BJP, charging it with losing "moral ground" to continue in power. Before the turmoil, the BJP in March had replaced Manohar Lal with Nayab Singh Saini, as Chief Minister.

OBC voters

Mr. Saini is an Other Backward Class (OBC) leader and by appointing him, it appeared the BJP wanted to firm up its hold among the OBCs, who account for around 40% of the State's population. The move also saw the political debate surrounding the "Jats vs non-Jats" narrative come to the fore again. Also, by removing Mr. Lal, who had been Chief Minister for around nine-and-a-half years, the BJP appeared to be combating the "anti-incumbency factor".

As campaigning gains momentum, the BJP is harping on what it terms an effective fight against corruption and nepotism, and its efforts to ensure transparency during its rule.

Besides, the party is showcasing the achievements of the Narendra Modi government, including the dilution of Article 370, the construction of Ram Mandir, and the strengthening of the country's economy, besides building a narrative around nationalism by raising the 2016 surgical strikes and the 2019 Balakot air strike.

The party, however, has found itself at the receiving end of farmers' anger, which has led to protests, boycott calls, and showing of black flags to its leaders while touring constituencies in the Jat heartland. Farmer groups have blamed the BJP for adopting an anti-farmer stance, and for not providing a legal guarantee on minimum support price for crops.

In the 2019 Lok Sabha election, the BJP secured a 58% vote share and the Congress 28%, while the INLD got less than 2%. The JJP managed 4.89%. The Assembly election is due in October, and the Lok Sabha election could signal which way the political wind is blowing.

The Opposition parties, including the Congress and the INLD, have been dismissing the claims of the BJP, accusing it of adopting policies that hurt all sections of society, be it farmers, workers, traders, youth, women, or government employees.

Anti-incumbency factor

The Congress is counting on the anti-incumbency factor and led by former Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda, has been aggressively raking up State-level issues to garner voter support for both the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections.

The expected split of Jat votes between the INLD and the JJP is likely to benefit the Congress, which could electorally gain in Jat-dominated areas. However, the Congress is riddled with factionalism, and the State unit has been functioning without any block and district committees for many years.

For the INLD, which saw a near washout in the 2019 Assembly election, it is a fight to reclaim – from the JJP – the legacy of INLD's founder Chaudhary Devi Lal, a farmer leader and former Deputy Prime Minister. Meanwhile, for the JJP, which came into existence after splitting the INLD in 2018, it is a battle to hold on to its core vote bank as it faces farmer organisations' ire for allegedly not supporting them when it was a coalition partner with the BJP in the State government.

A byelection is also scheduled for the Karnal Assembly seat on May 25, from which Mr. Saini is contesting.

Union Ministers Rao Inderjit Singh and Krishan Pal Gurjar are seeking re-election from Gurgaon and Faridabad respectively. The Congress has fielded Raj Babbar in Gurgaon.

Prominent candidates include Mr. Khattar from the Karnal constituency, the BJP's Naveen Jindal and Ranjit Singh Chautala, the INLD's Abhay Chautala, the AAP's Sushil Gupta, the Congress's Jai Prakash and the JJP's Naina Chautala.

INBRIEF

Two Gauhati High Court judges to be made permanent

The Supreme Court Collegium, headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) D.Y. Chandrachud, has recommended to the Centre the names of two additional judges for appointment as permanent judges of the Gauhati High Court. The Collegium recommended that Justice Rajesh Sekhri be appointed an additional judge of the Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court for a fresh term of one year with effect from July 29, 2024. "The Collegium resolves to recommend that Justice Susmita Phukan Khaund and Justice Mitali Thakuria, additional judges, be appointed permanent judges of the Gauhati High Court," said one of the Collegium resolutions. PTI

Jharkhand man killed, two injured in Manipur firing

A 42-year-old man from Jharkhand was killed and two were injured when unidentified gunmen opened fire at them in Imphal, Manipur on Saturday, a police official said. The deceased identified as Shree Ram Hansda was a resident of Godda district in Jharkhand and was working in Manipur as a labourer. The identity of the other two injured persons was not immediately known, but the police said that they were also from Jharkhand. The police official said that investigations were on and efforts under way to identify the accused.

Don't use calcium carbide to ripen fruits, orders FSSAI

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India has asked traders and food business operators not to use the banned chemical calcium carbide to ripen fruits. The FSSAI said it had alerted traders, fruit handlers and food business operators running ripening chambers to ensure compliance with the prohibition on calcium carbide for artificial ripening of fruits. It advised the Food Safety Departments of the States and Union Territories to take serious action against any person indulging in such unlawful practices under provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, and rules made there under. PTI

'Don't use Jackie Shroff's name, voice without consent'

The Delhi High Court has restrained various entities from using actor Jackie Shroff's name, including sobriquets "Jackie" and "Jaggu Dadda", voice and images for commercial purposes without permission. Justice Sanjeev Narula, in an interim order dated May 15, said the entities selling wallpapers, T-shirts and posters, etc. on e-commerce websites and operating an AI chatbot platform were *prima facie* acting in violation of the actor's personality and publicity rights by misappropriating his attributes. The judge passed the direction against two content creators who published videos of Mr. Shroff with "extremely profane words and abuses". The court said Mr. Shroff is a celebrity and this status inherently grants him certain rights. PTI

SUDOKU

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★☆☆

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

6	7	3	1	4	9	8	2	5
5	1	4	6	8	2	7	3	9
9	8	2	5	7	3	1	4	6
1	6	8	4	5	7	3	9	2
3	4	9	2	6	1	5	7	8
7	2	5	9	3	8	6	1	4
8	9	1	3	2	5	4	6	7
4	3	7	8	9	6	2	5	1
2	5	6	7	1	4	9	8	3

Modi, Rahul pull no punches as poll battle reaches Delhi

While PM said leaders of the INDIA bloc have looted the people of Delhi, the Congress leader said the common man has not benefited from BJP's policies and only a few industrialists have gained, and this election is to save the Constitution

Satvika Mahajan
Ashna Butani
NEW DELHI

Battleground: Narendra Modi meeting a family from Pakistan, which got citizenship in India under the CAA recently, in New Delhi on Saturday; Congress leader Rahul Gandhi with Ajay Maken, Devender Yadav and J.P. Aggarwal during a rally. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA, PTI

The election fever reached the national capital on Saturday with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi addressing rallies in the Northeast Delhi and Chandini Chowk Lok Sabha constituencies. In both gatherings, the issue of "corruption" took centre stage.

While Mr. Modi said leaders of the INDIA bloc had looted the people of Delhi and those politicians who came to fight corruption were now embroiled in scams and found themselves in jail, Mr. Gandhi said the common man had not benefited from the Modi government and only a handful of rich industrialists had. He referred to the electoral bonds, and said they were "misused" as those being investigated by the Central agencies had been donating to the BJP to get off the hook.

Kejriwal campaign

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, out on interim bail to campaign after spending time in Tihar Jail, chose a different style of campaigning and addressed five "street corner sabhas" in West Delhi, asking people to vote for the INDIA bloc to ensure he stays out of jail.

Hitting out at the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and Congress's 4-3 seat sharing pact in the capital, Mr. Modi said, "The Congress first took credit for exposing the liquor scam, but has joined hands with them."

He said the "Congress does *dosti* (friendship) in Delhi and Haryana, but *khusti* (wrestling) in Punjab." The AAP and the Congress do not have a seat sharing alliance in Punjab.

The attack continued with Mr. Modi slamming the alliance and saying the Congress ruled Delhi for so long, but now it can't even fight four seats on its own. He said the Congress's manifesto is akin to the Muslim League's, and the party wants to "steal your wealth and give to their own vote bank".

Countering the AAP's flagship electricity scheme, Mr. Modi spoke about the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijlee Yojana which will make the electricity bill zero up to 300 units. "For this the government will give you help of Rs. 75,000. With this money, put a solar panel in your homes," he said.

He hit out at the AAP government for the lack of implementation of the Ayushman Bharat scheme. "I have decided to ensure it reaches every home, but the Delhi government is stopping it from happening."

'Won't debate'

Slamming the Prime Minister, Mr. Gandhi said, "Mr. Modi is giving non-stop interviews to his favourite journalists, but he will not have a debate with me because he knows he cannot answer my questions."

"Mr. Modi talks about the Congress getting Tempo loads of money from Adani-Ambani, but he doesn't dare to get it probed," he said.

Mr. Gandhi said he is "ready to debate with Mr. Modi whenever and wherever he wants."

"But I'm sure he won't come. The first question I would ask Mr. Modi is what is his relationship with Adani? Next I want to ask him about electoral bonds," the former Congress chief said.

Mr. Gandhi said the debate would end after these two questions, but he also wants to ask the Prime Minister why he asked the public to bang plates and flash mobile phones when people were suffering from COVID. "He won't join a debate with me, but he speaks in his rallies only about issues I raise. When I said why he does not talk about Adani-Ambani, he talked about it immediately," he said.

Talking about the synergy of the AAP-Congress alliance, Mr. Gandhi said this time, he will press the AAP button while Mr. Kejriwal will press the Congress button. "Narendra Modi had started politics of hate. There is no need for this in India. Delhi does not need it.... AAP and Congress have joined hands to spread love in this environment of hate," he said.

"Everyone's goal is to save the Constitution. I appeal to the AAP and the Congress workers to do the same in their respective constituencies," Mr. Gandhi said.

Talking about the Congress and INDIA bloc's plans if they form the government, Mr. Gandhi said, "We will throw the Agniveer scheme in the dustbin, simplify GST and help small businessmen rather than big industrialists."

(*With inputs from PTI*)

Cong. urges EC to act against PM's bulldozer jibe

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and other INDIA leaders on Saturday criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi's remark that the Opposition would demolish the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, if elected to power. At a joint press conference, they affirmed their commitment to protecting religious freedom and upholding the Constitution.

Mr. Kharge demanded that the Election Commission take action against Mr. Modi for the remark. "We have never used a bulldozer on anyone. It is their [BJP] culture, not ours. Mr. Modi lies and incites people about actions the Congress will never take or that are impossible," he said. At a rally in Uttar Pradesh on Friday, Mr. Modi said that if the Samajwadi Party and the Congress came to power, "they will send Ram Lalla back to the tent and bulldoze the temple".

Asked about Mr. Modi's claim that the Congress would also reinstate Article 370, he said, "I am not answerable to Mr. Modi. We will implement what we have promised in our manifesto." He accused Mr. Modi of creating societal divisions. Nationalist Congress Party (SP) leader Sharad Pawar, Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Uddhav Thackeray, Congress Maharashtra incharge Ramesh Chennithala and State Congress president Nana Patole were present.

Manmohan Singh, Hamid Ansari, M.M. Joshi cast their vote from home

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Hamid Ansari, Manmohan Singh and Murli Manohar Joshi after casting their votes in New Delhi. PTI

Former Vice-President Mohammad Hamid Ansari, former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and former Union Minister Murli Manohar Joshi cast their votes from their residences on May 16 and 17.

The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of Delhi said the second day of the home voting facility for elderly voters and persons with disability was completed successfully.

"Former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and former Union Minister Murli Manohar Joshi successfully cast their votes on May 17 from their home availing home voting facility in the New Delhi parliamentary constituency," the office said.

The exercise will continue till May 24. Polls are scheduled in the national capital for May 25.

Second day voting

On the second day, 1,409 voters cast their ballots from the comfort of their homes across all seven Lok Sabha constituencies in Delhi. The West Delhi constituency reported the highest number of home votes, with 348 voters participating. Among them, 299 were elderly individuals.

With the completion of the second day, 2,956 voters have exercised their right to vote from home, the Delhi CEO said.

This exercise was launched by the Delhi CEO on May 16, wherein 1,482 voters exercised their franchise from home.

The West Delhi constituency led on the first day with 406 home votes, including of 338 elderly voters. Mr. Ansari highlighted the importance and acceptance of this initiative.

Overall Registration

A total of 5,406 voters across Delhi, elderly individuals, and disabled people have filled Form 12D to avail themselves of the home voting facility in the 2024 election.

The home voting facility is designed to help voters aged 85 and above and those with disabilities to vote. This initiative ensures these voters can participate in the electoral process with ease and dignity, eliminating the need to visit polling stations, the Delhi CEO added.

(*With PTI inputs*)

Poll-related seizures estimated at nearly ₹9,000 cr. this time

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Election-time seizures this time will soon cross a staggering ₹9,000 crore, the highest in any elections so far, the Election Commission (EC) said on Saturday.

The poll body said that agencies had made seizures estimated at ₹8,889 crore so far, and at ₹3,958 crore, drugs amounted to 45% of the loot.

The seizures included ₹849.15 crore in cash, liquor valued at ₹814.85 crore, drugs estimated at ₹3,958.85 crore and precious metals that cost ₹1,260.33 crore. The Gujarat Anti-Terrorism Squad, Narcotics Control Bureau and Coast Guard, in joint operations, have made three high-value seizures of drugs in just three days, amounting to ₹892 crore, the EC said in a statement.

The commission has laid special emphasis on seizure of narcotics and psychotropic substances. Analysis of data found that the States or Union Territories that used to be transit zones were increasingly becoming consumption territories, it said.

Drugs, liquor, precious metals, freebies and cash influence elections in varying degrees, some flowing directly as inducements while others through reduced levels of circulation of money, the poll body said.

The commission said last month that even before polling began for the election, it had seized ₹4,650 crore.

In Azamgarh, BJP seeks votes on secularism, SP on jobs, inflation

Sobhana K. Nair
AZAMGARH

The Samajwadi Party (SP) and the BJP are both using secularism as a bait to capture votes in Azamgarh.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his speech here on Thursday argued that the SP has been exploiting communal schisms for electoral benefit, while the SP said the BJP's "politics of hatred" has torn the social fabric of the State.

"Chanting Pakistan, Pakistan for so long, we have been reduced to Pakistan. Look at our inflation, it is comparable to theirs now," Suraj Bhan Ram, an autorickshaw driver at Belariyaganj, said with disgust at the current political narrative. Mr. Ram belongs to the Chamar Scheduled Caste community. He said that people have little money to spare and this in turn has reduced the number of passengers he gets each day.

At an election rally in Lalganj, Azamgarh, Mr. Modi on Thursday said the district had become infamous as the breeding ground of terrorism, with the SP providing political cover to the "sleeper cells". "Under the cover of secularism, the SP had been indulging in vote bank politics," he said. He reiterated his earlier comments on redirecting the reservation quota and redistributing wealth to the SP-Congress 'vote bank'.

Strong contender: SP candidate Dharmendra Yadav during an election campaign in Azamgarh on Saturday. X/@MPDHARMENDRAYDV

Around the same time as Mr. Modi's address, several kilometres away at a mango orchard in Gopalpur, SP candidate Dharmendra Yadav and singers kept the restive crowd entertained with songs extolling communal harmony and blaming the BJP for driving a wedge between Hindus and Muslims.

Mr. Dharmendra, who came four hours late, delivered a seven-minute speech that began on a sombre note. He said the country is going through an "arduous time", exhorting voters to stay united to bring the INDIA bloc to power in Delhi.

"If by some misfortune the BJP returns to power, believe me, we will not get another chance to cast our vote," he said.

Mr. Dharmendra said the incidents of paper leak are an organised effort by the State government not to provide government jobs to the Indian youth, paving the way for more privatisation.

"Baba*ji* (Yogi Adityanath) makes tall claims about maintaining law and order. But has his bulldozer ever run over anyone accused of leaking exam papers? He won't do that, because he himself is involved in the paper leak. They leak papers so that they do not have to fill the vacancies," he said.

Mr. Dharmendra fought the 2022 bypoll from Azamgarh after the seat fell vacant when SP chief Akhilesh Yadav resigned and chose his berth in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly after the party's defeat in the Assembly polls. He, however, lost the byelection by a margin of little over 8,000 votes. Since then, the SP has taken corrective steps, including bringing on board the BSP's Guddu Jamali who in the 2022 byelection polled 2.6 lakh votes.

Dalit voters, who form the third biggest bloc, often hold the key. In this election, there has been confusion in the BSP's ranks with the party twice changing its candidate too close to the election.

INBRIEF

Logistics firm Delhivery's Q4 net loss narrows to ₹68 crore

Logistics firm Delhivery said its consolidated net loss narrowed to ₹68.4 crore in the March quarter, aided by higher income. It had posted a ₹158.6 crore net loss in the year-earlier period, the company said in a filing. Total income in the quarter under review increased to ₹2,194.5 crore from ₹1,934.2 crore a year earlier. Expenses were ₹2,257.2 crore against ₹2,107.6 crore a year earlier. For the full 2024 fiscal, net loss slid to ₹259.2 crore from ₹1,007.7 crore in FY23. PTI

Nestle India holders reject plan to raise royalty to parent

Shareholders in Nestle India rejected a company proposal to raise royalty payments to its Swiss parent Nestle, the company said. The motion called for the royalty paid to its parent to climb to 5.25% of net sales, net of taxes, compared with the current 4.5%. The increase was proposed at a rate of 0.15% per annum. About 70.8% of public shareholders voted against the increase, a filing showed. The company did not say whether it intends to review the proposal. REUTERS

OYO said to withdraw DRHP, to refile IPO post refinancing

Softbank-backed OYO is set to refile IPO papers as the global travel-tech player is close to finalising refinancing plans to raise up to $450 million via sale of dollar bonds, sources said. JP Morgan is the likely lead banker for refinancing via the sale of dollar bonds at an estimated interest rate of 9-10% a year, a source said. In preparation for the refinancing, OYO has moved application with markets regulator SEBI to withdraw its current draft red herring prospectus (DRHP). PTI

'Sachetisation of F&O trade risks savings'

CEA Nageswaran emphasises need to reconsider making trade in futures and options accessible to smaller investors given the requirement of a higher level of financial literacy for derivatives trading as well as the potential diversion of household savings that poses dangers to financial stability

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Cautioning against household savings getting invested in futures and options trade, Chief Economic Advisor V. Anantha Nageswaran on Saturday said there is a need to reconsider sachetisation of F&O trade because it requires a different level of financial literacy.

Speaking at the CII's Annual Business Summit, Mr. Nageswaran said whenever financial sector development preceded national development the story hadn't ended well.

"Asian crisis 1997-98 is a very important example," he said. "When we take pride in the fact that we have the world's largest trading volume in futures and options (F&O), we need to ask ourselves is that a sign of progress or a sign of concern," he asked.

'Productive purposes'

He said the financial sector has a responsibility to ensure that capital market grows in those areas where we can actually harness Indian household savings for productive purposes.

"Many of the people currently engaged in the market do not understand them... The sachetisation of futures and options is something that we need to reconsider because financial literacy that is required for trading stocks is very different for trading futures and options," Mr. Nageswaran said.

Past lessons: Whenever financial sector development preceded national development the story hadn't ended well: CEA. THE HINDU

Sachetisation refers to the process of making financial products and services available in smaller, more manageable packets.

Net household savings slid sharply by ₹9 lakh crore in three years to ₹14.16 lakh crore at the end of FY23.

The data showed investment in mutual funds almost trebled to ₹1.79 lakh crore in three years from ₹64,084 crore in FY21. Household investment in shares and debentures almost doubled to ₹2.06 lakh crore in FY23.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had earlier this week cautioned against an "unchecked explosion" in retail F&O trading saying it may potentially create problems in household finances.

"Household finances have made a generational shift. We want to safeguard them," she said while urging exchanges NSE, BSE and market regulator SEBI to work together and develop robust regulatory standards to safeguard investors' interests.

The pandemic saw F&O segment participation surge more than sixfold

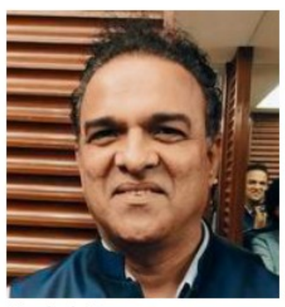
Aditya Birla Sun Life plans to double business by FY27, with new sales route and products

N. Anand
CHENNAI

Aditya Birla Sun Life Insurance Co. Ltd. (ABSLI) has drawn up a multi-pronged strategy to double its business over the next three years using an unconventional route and innovative products, said its MD & CEO Kamlesh Rao.

"We have drawn up plans to double our revenues from all streams by FY27," he said in an interaction.

The plan entails an attempt at doubling the individual first-year premium from ₹3,000 crore to ₹6,000 crore, lifting group life insurance to ₹8,000 crore from ₹4,000 crore, raising the value of new business margin from ₹700 crore to ₹1,350 crore and gross written premium from ₹17,500 crore to ₹35,000 crore.


Kamlesh Rao

Mr. Rao said, ABSLI plans to achieve this target by focusing on new products, enhancing distribution channels, doubling manpower and creating new distribution agencies.

'Unconventional route'

Talking about the unconventional route, he said: "Our initial focus is on two-wheeler, four-wheeler and commercial vehicle dealers, chemists, jewellers, travel agents and holiday partners, who have a huge loyal customer base.

At the dealerships, we have vehicle insurance agents, who have not sold life insurance in the past. We are targeting them."

ABSLI also did a pilot run with 65 partners in a tier-III town in Uttar Pradesh. Though it tasted some success with car and two-wheeler dealers, interest from chemists and jewellers was lukewarm. The firm is likely to try its hand with travel agents and resort owners soon.

"While some came forward to deploy their own staff for the new services, others sought our help in training. We will be looking at more agencies. In the first year, we expect to do a business of ₹150 crore," Mr. Rao said.

Bespoke plans

Asserting that they are currently ranked fifth in group life insurance and seventh in individual life insurance, he said the target was to scale each of the rankings up by two more notches, respectively.

Mr. Rao said the insurer was focused on providing different sets of products for different segments of people such as the income protection plan by June and a new savings product targeting women by August/September.

Equity, NCD holders okay IDFC-IDFC First merger

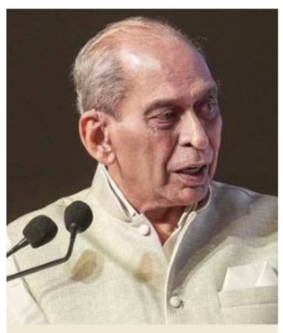
Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Shareholders and non-convertible debenture (NCD) holders of IDFC First Bank have approved a proposal to merge parent IDFC Ltd. with the lender.

The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) convened a meeting on May 17 through video conferencing and other audio-visual means to consider and approve the composite scheme of amalgamation for IDFC First Bank, the bank said in a regulatory filing with the exchanges.

'N. Vaghul – A rare diamond'

R. Seshasayee
CHENNAI


1936-2024

My dear friend Vaghul was a rare diamond of splendorous colours.

He was widely and rightly respected as an outstanding institution builder, having been the motive spirit in founding several reputed institutions spanning a wide range of areas – finance, education, academic research and technology – to name a few.

'Outstanding banker'

Vaghul was an outstanding banker and to him should go the credit for encouraging and promoting several entrepreneurs, whose business groups occupy today the top slots in industry listings. That he did so, within the stifling confines of a development banking institution and without ever crossing ethical boundaries, is a tribute to his genius.

I was privileged to be on the Board of ICICI when it transformed itself from a development financial institution to a 'universal bank' in the late 1990s.

That was an unprecedented step.

'Leadership school'

He steered this audacious transformation by creating a galaxy of exceptional leaders whom he identified, mentored and developed. ICICI became a leadership school, whose alumni like K.V. Kamath, Kalpana Morparia, Shikha Sharma, Nachiket Mor and many others went on to not only lead institutions, but also to transform the the landscape of the financial sector.

The Board meetings of ICICI were always exciting and educative, as many pioneering concepts – from floating the first credit rating institution to launching insurance companies and venture capital funds – took birth there.

I'd never fail to be amazed at his razor-sharp analysis, his wisdom and depth of erudition

'Master raconteur'

The post meeting lunches and dinners were guaranteed to be even more exciting, as we would roar with laughter, listening to Vaghul narrate stories, in his inimitable style, of his experience with wayward politicians, arrogant bureaucrats and truant businessmen. He was a master raconteur.

Vaghul cut the shrubs and cleared many a new path in the financial sector, which have become busy highways now.

'Faith in research'

His genius could not be contained within the financial sector, although that was his principal calling. Being a voracious reader, he could even be said to be an academician, masquerading as a banker, very successful at that. Institute of Financial Management & Research, its affiliate, the Krea University, and Pratham, all of which he either founded or mentored, stand testimony to his abiding faith that high quality education and research are fundamental to the realisation of his dream of a New India.

He could engage reputed historians in conversations with matching erudition, or comment on cricket, like an expert on the sport. He could talk to you both for and against Advaitha philosophy, like a professional lawyer. Actually, everything around him in the world aroused his curiosity. His appetite for learning was insatiable.

'Incredibly simple'

For all his accomplishments, and the honours and accolades he received, including the award of Padma Bhushan, Vaghul was an incredibly simple person, not surprisingly so, as he was mentored by R.K. Talwar, who was a former Chairman of State Bank of India, where Vaghul began his career as a probationary officer. Talwar was a rare combination of professional brilliance, humility and simplicity. Talwar once told me that he thought that Vaghul was a better manager than himself. A clear revelation of the greatness of both.

During the last several years, we spoke at least once a week, sometimes many times more. We would exchange notes about the books that we were reading or discuss philosophy, politics or people. I'd never fail to be amazed at his razor-sharp analysis, his wisdom and the depth of his erudition. A few days ago, we were chatting about the impact of AI on education.

I've no doubt he would continue his spirited conversations with smarter people up there, learning and challenging, all with his wicked sense of humour undiminished.

(The writer is currently the Chairman of Asian Paints Limited)

India, U.K. reaffirm FTA commitment at Strategic Dialogue

Press Trust of India
LONDON

Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra held discussions with his counterpart, Sir Philip Barton

India and Britain reaffirmed their commitment to conclude a mutually beneficial free trade agreement (FTA) at the annual U.K.-India Strategic Dialogue, as the two sides reflected on the "good progress" made on the 2030 Roadmap.

Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra, on a visit to the U.K. held discussions with his counterpart, Sir Philip Barton, Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO).

After their meeting, the FCDO said, "The two reflected on good progress on the 2030 Roadmap since the last review (in January 2023), noting key areas where the U.K. and India have worked together... This included collaborating on the world's first malaria vaccine," adding "this year's dialogue included ongoing commitment to negotiate a mutually beneficial free trade agreement, and enhance defence cooperation."

'FDI norms in some sectors may be eased'

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

India has recently relaxed foreign direct investment norms in the space sector and there is a possibility of further FDI liberalisation in certain other areas when the new government will come to power, a top official said on Saturday.

Secretary in Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) Rajesh Kumar Singh said in the last few years, India liberalised FDI policy in many segments.

India has one of the most liberal foreign direct investment (FDI) policies in the world and in fact, more liberal than many Southeast Asian countries that the country is often compared with, he said.

Recently FDI norms were eased in the space sector and "it is quite possible that under a new government, we can attempt some further liberalisation of any pockets that are left and where some liberalisation is possible," Mr. Singh said here at CII's annual business summit.

'Sundaram Home hopeful of continuing growth impetus'

Press Trust of India
CHENNAI

Sundaram Home Finance expects the growth momentum to continue in the current financial year and would focus expansion into smaller towns, a top official has said.

The city-based company, a wholly owned subsidiary of Sundaram Finance Ltd., would also be exploring opportunities in Tier 4 towns of South India, MD Lakshminarayanan Duraiswamy said.

Lakshminarayanan Duraiswamy

"Given that the small towns in the South Market are seeing a good pace of growth on the back of increased affordability, we continue to be positive on the outlook for the real estate sector and are hopeful that the growth momentum will continue," he said in a statement.

Q4 net rises

Earlier in the day, Sundaram Home Finance reported a net profit of ₹57 crore for the quarter ending March compared with ₹65 crore in the year-earlier period. Disbursements rose 20% to ₹1,469 crore. For FY24, the net profit grew to ₹236 crore from ₹215 crore registered in FY23.

Central Coalfields Limited
A Miniratna Company
(A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited)

NOTICE

"All the tenders issued by CIL and its Subsidiaries for procurement of Goods, Works and Services are available on websites of Coal India Ltd. **www.coalindia.in**/respective Subsidiary Company (CCL, **www.centralcoalfields.in**), CIL e-procurement portal **https://coalindiatenders.nic.in** and Central Public Procurement Portal **https://eprocure.gov.in** in addition, procurement is also done through GeM portal **https://gem.gov.in**''

NOTICE INVITING BID

Odisha State Medical Corporation Limited (OSMCL)
In front of Ram Mandir, Convent Square, Unit-III, Bhubaneswar-751001
Tel.:(0674) 2380950; Website: www.osmcl.nic.in ; Email: drugs-osmcl@gov.in

Bid Ref. No. : OSMCL/2024-25/OTH-DHS-I/05 Date : 18/05/2024

Online Bids through **e-Tender portal (https://tendersodisha.gov.in)** are invited from eligible bidders for **Supply of Insecticides as per the particulars mentioned below :**

Sl. No.	Particulars	Date and time	
1.	Date & time of release of bid	18/05/2024, 3 PM	
2.	Date & time for submission of queries by E-Mail id - **drugs-osmcl@gov.in**	21/05/2024, up to 5:00 PM	
3.	Date & time of Online bid submission	Start Date & Time	End Date & Time
		24/05/2024, 3 PM	10/06/2024, 6.00 PM
4.	Date & Time for submission of Tender Documents, Tender Document Fee and EMD amount as per section-IV of tender document.	Start Date & Time	End Date & Time
		11/06/2024, 10 AM	19/06/2024,11.00 AM
5.	Date & time of Online Technical bid Opening	19/06/2024, 11:30 AM	
6.	Date of opening of Price Bid	To be informed to the qualified bidders	

The bid document with all information relating to the bidding process including cost of bid document, EMDs, Prequalification criteria and terms & conditions are available in the websites: **www.osmcl.nic.in and https://tendersodisha.gov.in.** The Authority reserves the right to accept / reject any part thereof or all the bids without assigning any reason thereof. All notice will be published in the OSMCL website **www.osmcl.nic.in**. Hence the bidders are requested to visit OSMCL website **www.osmcl.nic.in** time to time for any published notice against the tender.

SD/- Managing Director, OSMC Ltd., Odisha

CAD-120 OIPR-10112/11/0001/2425

HPV vaccine prevents cervical cancer in deprived groups: study

The Hindu Bureau

The human papillomavirus, or HPV, vaccine is cutting cases of cervical cancer right across the socio-economic spectrum, with most cases being prevented in more deprived groups, according to a major study funded by Cancer Research UK.

Until now, there had been concerns that the HPV vaccine could have an unequal impact across society. After carrying out the longest follow-up on the effectiveness of the HPV vaccine, researchers at Queen Mary University of London concluded the HPV vaccination programme in England is helping to close some inequalities in cervical cancer. The results were published in the journal *BMJ*.

Public interventions

Due to a typically higher incidence of cervical cancer in more deprived groups, researchers found that more cases were prevented in the most deprived group (around 190), compared to the least deprived group (around 60) in a study that included approximately 6,50,000 people offered vaccination aged 12-18 years in each of the five deprivation groups.

The study reflected the huge success of the school-based vaccination programme, showing that well-executed public health interventions can help to reduce health inequalities.

The study adds even more weight to the evidence that HPV vaccination works. Researchers found that over a 12-year period, the vaccine reduced cervical cancer incidence rates by nearly 90% and pre-cancerous conditions by around 95% in women who were offered routine vaccination at 12-13 years old in England. The study shows that the vaccine is much more effective when taken up by children aged eight years (12-13 years) than later in life.

Although the life-saving HPV vaccine currently reaches people from all backgrounds, Cancer Research U.K. warns that some inequalities remain in cervical cancer incidence, and more work is needed to improve the health of the most deprived groups. Overall, cervical cancer rates are higher in people from deprived backgrounds across the U.K. Researchers said this is partly due to people being at greater risk from HPV and barriers that can drive lower screening attendance.

Cancer Research U.K. scientists helped to prove the link between HPV and cervical cancer 25 years ago. Cervical cancer rates in the U.K. have fallen by almost a third since the early 1990s. The HPV vaccination programme was first introduced to England in 2008.

Women with no sexual autonomy twice likely to get STIs: study

One in nearly every twelve married women in the age group of 15-49 years in India had experienced at least one sexually transmitted infection or reproductive tract infection over a period of one year

Maitri Porecha

Women who had controlling husbands and had experienced intimate partner violence in their married life are more at risk of developing sexually transmitted infection (STI) or reproductive tract infection (RTI) than women who do not report facing control or intimate partner violence (IPV) in their marriage, a new study reveals.

The study analyses data obtained from a sample size of 73,895 women in National Family Health Survey-5 (2019-2021) and was conducted by researchers in the School of Health Systems Studies in Mumbai-based Tata Institute of Social Sciences and Centre for Study of Regional Development in JNU.

One in nearly every 12 married women in the age group of 15-49 years in India had experienced at least one sexually transmitted infection or reproductive tract infection over a period of one year, the study states.

To gauge if women had experienced STI/RTI, those who reported being sexually active, were asked whether they had a disease through sexual contact, a bad-smelling abnormal genital discharge, and a genital sore or ulcer in the last 12 months preceding the survey.

The study analyses in detail questions posed to women in NFHS-5 pertaining to sexual autonomy – if a wife knows her husband has a sexually transmitted disease, is she justified in asking use of a condom when they have sex; if a wife knows her husband has sex with other women, is she justified in refusing to have sex with him; and can a wife say no to her husband when she does not want to have sexual intercourse with him.

Association between STIs and intimate partner violence

Women who experienced intimate partner violence are more at risk of developing sexually transmitted infections

- 18.4% of women who experienced intimate partner violence had substantially higher sexually transmitted infection (STI) or reproductive tract infection (RTI), compared with 9.7% who did not face intimate partner violence
- 15.9% of women who faced controlling attitudes of the husband reported STI/RTI
- Women with no sexual autonomy and exposed to intimate partner violence were 2.3 times more likely to have STI/RTI
- Women without sexual autonomy and who faced controlling attitudes by husbands were twice more likely to be exposed to RTI
- Women with sexual autonomy had 12% lower likelihood of having STI/RTI when sociodemographic factors were controlled
- Prevalence of STI/RTI was higher among younger women aged 15-24 years (13%) and 25-34 years (13.2%), compared with older women aged 35-49 years (11.6%)

Grim: 31% of 73,895 women faced intimate partner violence — physical or sexual

The study reveals that a majority – 73% women of the total sample size claimed that they had sexual autonomy. A third of the same sample size (31%) had faced intimate partner violence be it physical which included the husband pushing the wife, kicking her, dragging or punching her and so on, sexual which includes the husband forcing the wife to have sex with him or emotional where the husband has humiliated or threatened to hurt the wife or someone close to her or insulted her. Also, 46% of the same sample size said that they faced controlling attitudes from their husbands, which included the husband being jealous if the wife talked to other men, frequently accusing the wife of being unfaithful, not permitting the wife from meeting female friends, trying to limit wife's contact with her core family, insisting on knowing where she is at all times, and not trusting her with money.

"The study reveals that STI/RTI infection was substantially higher among women who experienced intimate partner violence (18.4%) as compared to those women who did not (9.7%). Also 15.9% women who face controlling attitudes of their husbands reported STI/RTI as compared to 9.4% women who reported STI/RTI but did not face control from their husband," said Pintu Paul, co-author of the study.

Controlling attitudes

Women who had no sexual autonomy and were exposed to intimate partner violence were 2.3 times more likely to have STI/RTI than those who had sexual autonomy and were not exposed to intimate partner violence. Similarly, women without sexual autonomy and whose husbands endorsed controlling attitudes were over twice more likely to be exposed to RTI than those who had sexual autonomy and had not experienced their husband's controlling attitudes.

Mr. Paul further said women who had sexual autonomy and freedom of physical mobility were 24% less likely to experience RTI compared to those who did not. Women's freedom of movement is measured by their ability to go to the market, the health centre and places outside the village or community.

However, the influence of household decision-making was greater than physical mobility in reducing the risk of RTI among women. "Women who had sexual autonomy and decision-making autonomy had a 36% decreased likelihood of having RTI infection than those who had not," Mr. Paul emphasised. A woman's household decision-making ability is assessed in terms of whether she can take decisions about her own health care, make large purchases for the household and visit family or relatives.

Mr. Paul also said, "After controlling for sociodemographic factors in the full model, women with sexual autonomy were associated with a 12% lower likelihood of having STI/RTI than those without sexual autonomy."

Also, the prevalence of STI/RTI was higher among younger women aged 15 to 24 years (13%) and 25 to 34 years (13.2%) as compared to older women aged 35 to 49 years (11.6%).

"Our findings call for policy-level interventions to prevent child marriage and domestic violence against women and change regressive social norms that curb women's decision-making ability and freedom of movement," Mr. Paul added.

Can humans get H5N1 by consuming raw milk?

R. Prasad

Even while no case of H5N1 infection in humans has been reported after consuming raw milk, scientists believe that the virus can be transmitted via an infected cow's milk that has not been pasteurised. The lone reported human case in the current outbreak of cattle spread across 49 herds in nine States in the U.S. has been a dairy farm worker who had direct exposure to cows and developed conjunctivitis. The Atlanta-based CDC has advised people to desist from consuming uncooked dairy food products such as raw, unpasteurised milk, or raw cheeses from animals with suspected or confirmed H5N1 bird flu virus infection.

While FAO noted that H5N1 virus was detected in "high concentrations in milk from infected dairy cattle and at levels greater than that seen in respiratory samples", there are no reports of viable H5N1 virus being found in raw milk samples. "I have not come across any report of actual isolation of influenza viruses from raw milk. Most reports on viral loads in milk are based on molecular sequencing data rather than actual isolation of the virus from milk. It will be RT-PCR or sequencing of fragments," immunologist Dr. Vineeta Bal, a visiting faculty at IISER Pune says in an email to *The Hindu*.

Despite CDC warning people to avoid consuming raw milk, sales of raw milk in the U.S. has increased sharply since the H5N1 outbreak in cattle was first reported there on March 25 this year. Yet, there has not been any reported case of human infection after raw milk intake. Even as it makes eminent sense to avoid consuming raw milk,

Remote: Almost all human influenza virus infections are respiratory infections unlike in some other mammals. REUTERS

especially in places where H5N1 outbreak in cattle has been reported in the U.S., how likely are people to be infected with H5N1 via raw milk? "We need to remember that viruses outside a cell do not have life of their own. The biological plausibility of transmission through milk is very limited," Dr. Chandrakant Lahariya, physician epidemiologist and a public policy and health systems expert says in an email to *The Hindu*.

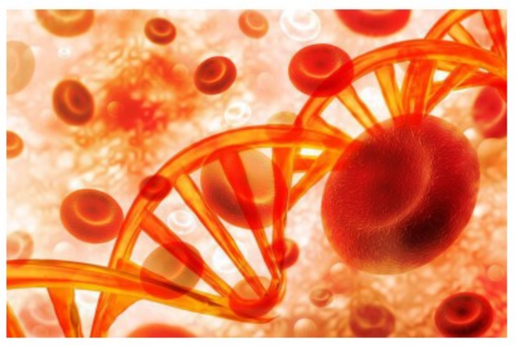
"There are very few human cases reported so far and almost all of those were in farm workers who had come in close contact with infected animals. In these cases, the likely route of transmission was airborne. Raw milk from H5N1 infected cows may not cause illness in humans as the route of introduction of the virus is oral rather than nasopharyngeal," says Dr. Bal. "Theoretical possibility of a human being catching H5N1 infection from infected raw milk is very low. Till date, there has been no documented evidence of H5N1 transmission from animals to humans via the oral route."

Dr. Bal goes further to underscore the odds of H5N1 infection in humans through the consumption of raw milk. "Almost all human influenza virus infections are primarily respiratory infections unlike in some other mammals where gut infections are reported. Based on that it can be stated that consumption of heavily infected H5N1 containing raw milk is unlikely to cause illness in human beings."

There are many reports of cats being infected with H5N1 in the current outbreak in the U.S. In a recent study, domestic cats fed with raw, unpasteurised colostrum and milk from affected cows developed fatal systemic influenza infection, thus demonstrating the oral route of transmission in cats. "Some birds (poultry) as well as cats do show susceptibility to influenza virus infections via oral route. So far humans have not been infected by faeco-oral route even if the virus is shed by humans in the excreta. We know this from the SARS-CoV-2 example too," says Dr. Bal.

Despite the CDC's warning, there is a growing misconception among people in the U.S. that immunity against H5N1 virus can be developed by drinking raw milk containing viable viruses. These notions have no scientific basis whatsoever. "There is no basis for this assumption at all. Drinking raw milk might prove more risky due to the presence of many other pathogens which are known to be present in raw, unpasteurised milk," Dr. Bal cautions.

SNAPSHOTS

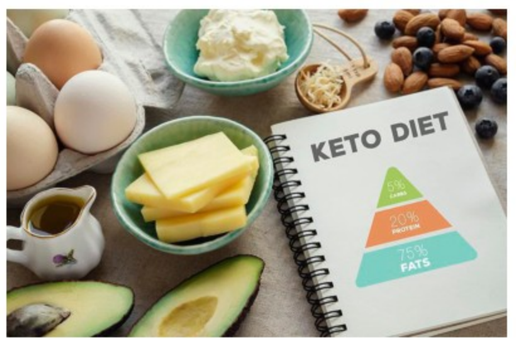


Miniaturised probe help track blood clots in tiny arteries

Researchers have engineered a tiny, snake-like imaging probe – a miniaturised endovascular neuro optical coherence tomography – that can navigate the labyrinth of tiny arteries in the brain, offering a tool to guide medical interventions for strokes and other artery conditions. In a human trial, the probe captured disease-linked features in blood vessels, supporting its diagnostic and clinical utility. The probe successfully captured 3D images of the patients' arteries and various artery segments.

Tool use promotes foraging success in sea otters

Using tools, like shells and rocks, to open their often thick-shelled mollusk prey increases foraging success in sea otters and protects their teeth from damage by allowing the animals to eat prey that would otherwise be difficult to obtain. The findings suggest that this behaviour is a necessity for the survival of some otters in environments where preferred prey is in short supply. The tool-use frequency enabled the use of a variety of prey, which led to higher energy consumption rates and reduced tooth wear.



Intermittent keto diet causes less damage to mice cells

A new study in mice suggests that intermittently following a ketogenic diet could render the austere diet less damaging to major organs, including the heart and kidneys. This diet has gained popularity as a treatment for resistant epilepsy and, in other cases, an approach to weight loss. Ketogenic diets are very high in fat and especially low in energy-fueling carbohydrates. They coerce the liver to produce fat-derived energy in a process known as ketosis.

Question Corner

Perceiving colour

How does the brain turn light waves into experiences of colour?

Researchers have discovered specific networks of neurons in fruit flies that respond selectively to various hues. Hue denotes the perceived colors associated with specific wavelengths, or combinations of wavelengths of light, which themselves are not inherently colourful. Scientists had previously reported finding neurons in animals' brains that respond selectively to different colors or hues, say, red or green. But no one had been able to trace the neural mechanisms making this hue selectivity possible. Now, the researchers have been able to find the fly brain connections. The intricate map details how some 130,000 neurons and 50 million synapses in a fruit-fly's poppy seed-sized brain are interconnected. With the connectome serving as a reference, the researchers used their observations of brain cells to develop a diagram they suspected represents the neuronal circuitry behind hue selectivity. The modeling helped reveal that these circuits can host activity required for hue selectivity.

Readers may send their questions / answers to questioncorner@thehindu.co.in

Why is RBI keeping an eye on gold loans?

What prompted the central bank to increase its scrutiny of the gold loan business of NBFCs?

Prashanth Perumal

The story so far:

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) earlier this month asked gold loan lenders to stick to regulatory norms while lending in a bid to tighten its grip over Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs). The RBI has increased its scrutiny of NBFCs after it found certain NBFCs to be flouting regulatory norms. In March, the RBI banned IIFL Finance from issuing fresh gold loans after the firm was found violating lending norms.

What are the RBI's gold loan norms?

The RBI stipulates lenders to comply with certain norms while lending money in lieu of gold. For instance, lenders are not allowed to lend any amount of money that is greater than 75% of the value of the gold that is submitted as collateral by the borrower. This is to ensure that banks have sufficient cushion to absorb any losses by selling the gold in case the borrower defaults on the loan.

And in order to comply with income tax rules, the RBI also mandates that when a loan is disbursed to a borrower, no more than ₹20,000 can be disbursed in the form of cash; the remaining loan amount needs to be deposited in the borrower's bank account. It also instructs lenders to conduct the auction of any gold (in case a borrower defaults) in a fair and transparent manner in locations that are accessible to the borrowers.

It is believed that the RBI is working on detailed guidelines for gold loans that lenders will have to follow.

Why does the RBI want to reinforce these norms now?

The RBI says it has found some NBFCs to be violating regulations linked to gold-based lending. IIFL Finance was disciplined in March for violating norms related to the size and form of loan disbursals, the evaluation and assaying of gold, the levying of charges, and irregularities in the auction process. For instance, the RBI found that there were loan-to-value irregularities in over two-thirds of defaulted accounts in the case of IIFL Finance.

Many non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) may have to become less aggressive in their lending practices as the Reserve Bank of India enforces the loan-to-value rules more strictly

It should be noted that NBFCs may want to increase the size of their loan book at an aggressive pace in an attempt to grow their business, and thus may be willing to offer loans of value that exceed 75% of the value of the underlying collateral. To do this, NBFCs may try to deliberately overestimate the value of the gold that the borrowers submit as collateral. It is thus not surprising that the RBI has raised concerns about the way in which gold is assayed and valued by NBFCs.

Lenders such as IIFL Finance were using internal assayers to evaluate the value and the purity of the gold offered as collateral by borrowers. This is in contrast to gold loans extended by banks wherein external assayers determine the value and purity of the gold. It should be noted that the gold loan portfolio of NBFCs has increased at an aggressive pace since the pandemic, growing over four fold from about ₹35,000 crore at the end of financial year 2020 to about ₹1,31,000 crore by the end of FY 2023.

The RBI may fear that such aggressive lending by NBFCs is happening in widespread violation of lending norms and that this could potentially cause systemic trouble in the future as the gold loan industry grows in size rapidly.

How will the RBI's scrutiny affect NBFCs?

The NBFCs expect the RBI's scrutiny of their lending practices to affect their growth and profitability. The RBI's insistence that no more than ₹20,000 shall be disbursed as cash when a loan is approved, for instance, is expected to make NBFC gold loans less attractive.

The NBFCs have taken pride in offering emergency cash to borrowers at short notice unlike banks, particularly to those who are not part of the banking system and deal primarily in cash. Many NBFCs might also have to become less aggressive in their lending practices as the RBI enforces the loan-to-value rules more strictly.

It should be noted that the RBI had temporarily allowed lenders to make loans up to 90% of the value of the underlying gold collateral during the pandemic to help borrowers, and this also helped NBFCs expand their loan books aggressively.

Further, measures to make the auction process more transparent and accessible to borrowers could increase the cost of doing business for NBFCs and lead to higher borrowing rates for lenders. The RBI, on the other hand, may believe that its lending norms will make the gold loan business more sustainable and help avoid systemic risks in the long run.

The takeaway from Mumbai hoarding tragedy

Did the massive structure at Ghatkopar meet size and safety norms? Who is responsible for the construction and maintenance of advertisement hoardings and ensuring rules are being followed? With extreme weather, what do infrastructure projects need to look out for?

G. Ananthakrishnan

The story so far:

A giant advertisement hoarding in Mumbai's Ghatkopar area collapsed in a dust storm in Mumbai on May 13, killing at least 16 people. The brunt of the monstrous 250-tonne structure's fall was borne by a petrol pump below, where many of the victims were either fuelling up or going about their duties. The owner of the hoarding erected on massive metal frames in April, 2023 on Government Railway Police (GRP) land, Bhavesh Bhinde, absconded after the crash, but was later arrested in Rajasthan.

Who is responsible?

Pressure has built up on the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (BMC) to inspect and take action on illegal or unstable hoardings in the city, and to ask Railways and Mumbai Port Trust to provide stability certificates for others. Other cities too responded to the incident. Officials in Chennai, where a ban on hoardings is being lifted, removed over 460 structures. Several hundred applications to install hoardings are pending in the city. In Pune, a large hoarding fell on a parked truck soon after the Ghatkopar incident, but caused no injuries.

What safety norms apply to hoardings?

Local bodies issue licences for advertisement hoardings, particularly in bigger cities, stipulating that these structures should be approved by an executive authority. In Mumbai's case, the Mumbai Municipal Corporation Act (MMC) dating back to 1888 and amended over time stipulates that written permission of the Municipal Commissioner is needed to put up such structures under Section 328A.

Advertisement hoardings must meet norms, and these were apparently liberalised for Greater Mumbai through the Policy Guidelines for Display of Advertisements 2018 to tap the city's full financial potential. It is this document that makes structural stability certification from a registered structural engineer a condition for putting up hoardings, including sky signs that are larger than 100 sq. ft. For an on-ground hoarding on a site other than the business premises, the size limit is 40 feet by 40 feet as per this document. By all accounts, the massive hoarding in Ghatkopar did not meet size norms but was not brought down by official agencies in spite of being a highly visible hazardous structure. The Government Railway Police, on whose land the collapsed hoarding and others elsewhere have been put up, cited an ongoing dispute with the Corporation for not enforcing the law on hoardings, and took action only after the disaster. It is notable that the policy guidelines say hoardings existing as of May 1, 2014 should be reinstalled incorporating structural stability requirements, on a single pole or bipole, indicating that the Ghatkopar display would have had to meet safety norms.

The Ghatkopar disaster makes it evident that high winds or a cyclone expose the weakest infra-structure links, with deadly consequences

From a technical perspective, the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) lays out specifications for wind loads on hoardings under IS875, Part 3, giving formulae on how to calculate the force coefficients applicable to these wind-facing structures. If such standards are indeed applied by municipal bodies around the country, the data is not made public. No database of permits could be located on the BMC website in the hoardings section.

Why are technical standards important?

State governments keen to raise revenues through outdoor advertisement hoardings have been adopting a more liberal attitude to big displays in public places, as urbanisation and consumption drive the economy. The advent of digital boards has brought with it the possibility of moving displays, opening up avenues for different advertisers to use the same screens to show messages, raising rents for hoardings companies greatly.

Several legacy-style hoardings built on heavy metal frames but lacking an adequately solid foundation coexist with the new displays, particularly along highways and wide urban roads. The MMC Act of 1888 provides some regulatory exemptions to hoardings on railway land. The Ghatkopar disaster demonstrates that extreme weather, such as high winds or a cyclone sweeping a city, quickly exposes the weakest infrastructure links, with deadly consequences. The focus now is also on how prepared municipal and disaster management authorities are to deal with the fallout in crowded cities. In the Mumbai incident, the presence of a petrol pump prevented personnel from using gas cutters to remove the twisted metal frame for fear of triggering a fire. Allowing hazardous structures to come up thus reduces the efficiency of disaster management expertise. Several local bodies lack the capability or administrative machinery to ensure structural stability of hoardings. Implicit in such incidents is the role of corruption.

How is climate change a challenge?

The biggest threat to cities, especially along India's peninsular coastline, is extreme weather such as cyclones intensified by climate change. The northern Indian Ocean, which contributes extreme weather systems to the region, hosts 6% of global cyclones but has disproportionately high impacts each year. Scientist Roxy Mathew Koll of the Centre for Climate Change Research, Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Pune, says the intensity of cyclones in the Arabian Sea has increased 20% to 40% over the past four decades. The Indian Ocean, which has a big impact on peninsular weather events, is projected to warm continuously and rapidly in coming years, intensifying cyclones in a matter of days. The sea surface temperature of the Arabian Sea responsible for cyclone formation is 1.2-1.4 degrees C higher than four decades ago, while the Bay of Bengal is comparatively less warm with a 0.8 degrees C rise.

Data shows that summer monsoon rainfall over the sub-continent may be decreasing overall, but the number of extreme weather events involving heavy rain in a short period is rising. Along with cyclonic winds, torrential rainfall and heavy winds threaten coastal cities. This is a clear call to city governments to review conventional ideas on giant outdoor open-sky hoardings put up close to human activity.

Don't governments have legal liability?

Yes, the government and the owners of the private structures do have liability. Most recently, in 2022, the Delhi High Court dismissed an appeal filed by the Bank of Baroda, against a single judge's order in *BoB versus Mahesh Gupta*, granting compensation in a case where a man was struck by a sign board and the head injury led to his death.

The bank contended that heavy wind struck Delhi on the day of the incident and it was thus an act of god. This was rejected by the court, which observed that since Delhi witnesses such winds in May each year, it was a foreseeable risk. Moreover, the bank had control of the signboard and had not proved that it had periodically inspected it to ensure its stability and integrity. Extreme rainfall and winds are foreseeable events now across the country, with clear warnings available from weather agencies. Governments have to show due diligence to avert harm to citizens from official actions. Much like the Ghatkopar case, where many people were trapped in a hoarding collapse, the court held in the Delhi case thus: the deceased writ petitioner was a passer-by who met with the accident while exercising his right of passage on a public pathway which abutted the building in which the bank was housed.

Applying such a principle clearly makes several connected individuals liable for negligence in the Ghatkopar case, beginning with the owners of the land, the agency that put up the structure and the line officials responsible for enforcement, extending to the civic officials and police who witnessed flagrant violation of rules but took no action.

The writer is a Chennai-based journalist.

Deadly fall: Rescue and relief work underway at the site of the hoarding collapse at Ghatkopar, in Mumbai, on May 14. PTI

What are the NIA's allegations against NSCN?

Why has the National Investigation Agency filed a chargesheet against five people in a Guwahati court? What is the link with the Naga insurgency group? Is the hill tribal group helping valley-based insurgents in Manipur? What are the three main ethnic communities in the State?

Vijaita Singh

The story so far:

On March 7, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) filed a chargesheet in a Guwahati court where it accused the "China-Myanmar module" of the Isak-Muivah faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) of supporting cadres of two banned Meitei outfits, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and Kanglei Yaol Kanba Lup (KYKL), to infiltrate India. The NIA alleged that their aim was to exploit the current ethnic unrest in Manipur, which began in May 2023, with a larger goal to destabilise the State and wage a war against the Government of India.

Which are the main ethnic groupings?

The Meitei, Naga and Kuki-Zomi-Mizo are the three main ethnic groupings in Manipur. The Meiteis, the largest community, account for about 53% of the State's total population of 27.21 lakh (2011 Census). The Nagas and the Kuki-Zo which are categorised into 34 Scheduled Tribes constitute 17% and 26% of the population respectively. India and Myanmar share a 1,643 km unfenced border of 398 km along Manipur. In January, the Government decided to fence the entire border and end the Free Movement Regime (FMR) which allowed people to cross over without any documents or passport. People on both sides of the border share ethnic ties prompting the arrangement since 1968.

The chargesheet is the first official statement of links between the NSCN-IM and Imphal valley-based insurgent groups in the current crisis

What is the significance of the chargesheet?

The chargesheet was filed against five persons, M. Anand Singh, A. Kajit Singh, Keisham Johnson, L. Michael Mangangcha and K. Romojit Meitei, and is the first official statement of links between the NSCN-IM and Imphal valley-based insurgent groups during the current ethnic crisis. The accused were arrested on September 16, 2023 by the Manipur Police while travelling in a vehicle dressed in camouflage, resembling uniforms worn by security personnel. Three weapons and ammunition looted from police armouries were recovered. Following the arrests, Meira Paibi, the women's collective in Manipur, staged protests and clashed with the police demanding their release. A court granted them bail, but Anand Singh was picked up by the NIA and brought to Delhi.

The NIA said that Anand Singh is a trained cadre of the PLA, one of the eight Meitei insurgent groups that have been banned by the MHA for "advocating secession of Manipur from India through armed struggle." According to the NIA, Singh revealed that at the height of ethnic clashes, he was involved in other subversive activities along with other valley-based insurgent groups. The NIA said Singh mobilised local youth for armed training and that in July 2023 he participated in a weapons training camp organised at the Selloi Langamai Ecological Park near Keikhu by PLA cadres where around 80-90 young men received training in handling firearms. The PLA was formed in 1978 and continues to be one of the most violent terror outfits in the northeast and is currently led by M.M. Ngouba.

The NIA said the accused "criminally conspired with intent to carry out violent terror attacks targeting the rival Kuki-Zo community with prohibited arms and ammunition which were looted from various government sources."

Are there other active insurgent groups?

In 2008, 24 Kuki-Zo insurgent groups under the umbrella of the United Peoples' Front (UPF) and the Kuki National Organisation (KNO) signed a tripartite suspension of operations pact with the MHA and the Manipur government. On February 29 this year, when the pact came up for an annual extension, the Manipur government refused to send a representative, leaving the agreement in a limbo. Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh has accused the groups of violating the ground rules and instigating violence in the State. According to the ground rules, after a peace pact is signed, camps are earmarked for cadres and their weapons are accounted for through regular checks conducted by a security force decided by the government.

The agreement was signed in the wake of the Kuki-Naga clashes in the 1990s where hundreds were killed. The insurgent groups demanded an independent land for the Kuki-Zo people. The clashes and killings happened after the NSCN demanded that Kuki-Zo-inhabited areas be included in its proposed 'Greater Nagaland' project in the 1980s.

What is the NSCN's stand?

After *The Hindu* reported the NIA findings on May 14, the NSCN issued a statement, accusing the Indian security forces of helping the Kuki militant groups to wage war against the Meitei revolutionary groups in Myanmar. It said: "It is sensitive to the propaganda war waged by the Government of India against NSCN who had signed ceasefire with GOI and engaged in political talks for the last 27 years." Distancing itself from the violence in Manipur, the NSCN had said in a statement in August 2023 that "no ethnic blood should flow in Naga areas in the name of Meitei- Kuki-Zo ethnic conflicts."

Under the scanner: Cadres of the NSCN-IM in Dimapur in 2018. PTI

India's gateway to Central Asia

Chabahar

The project, which was launched in early 2000s and saw sporadic progress over the years, mainly due to geopolitical reasons, got a booster last week as India and Iran signed a long-term agreement to further develop and operate the port

Suhasini Haidar

Before Partition, the town of Chabahar (earlier known as Tiz) was right at India's doorstep, situated in Iran's Sistan Baluchistan province where the Panchatantra was once read in Persian (entitled 'Kalileh-wa-Dimna'), and Hindustani Urdu is understood and spoken commonly. But ties between independent India and Iran, before the 1979 revolution, were never very close, given the Shah's U.S.-tilt, and India's Non-Alignment push. In 1970, it was the Shah who first conceived of developing Chabahar (he even planned a U.S. submarine base there), given its salubrious weather and the fact that the warm-water port was Iran's only such foothold in the Indian Ocean, strategically located just between the Gulf of Oman and the Strait of Hormuz.

In 1993, Prime Minister Narasimha Rao travelled to Tehran for a path-breaking visit to build a new relationship with the Iranian regime. While the visit shored up Tehran's invaluable support to India on the international stage (Iran famously stopped a Pakistan-backed Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) proposal against India at the UN HRC in 1994 after an air-dash visit by then Foreign Minister Dinesh Singh to request President Ali Akbar Rafsanjani's help), it also began a conversation between the two countries over Chabahar.

In the 1990s, Iran offered India a chance to develop Chabahar, and some groundwork was laid. But it wasn't until Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's visit to Tehran in 2001 and then President Mohammad Khatami's visit to Delhi as the chief guest on Republic Day in 2003 that discussions sealed the Chabahar deal between the two countries. According to the Delhi Declaration signed by both leaders, the two countries decided to build the sea link from India to Chabahar, and "through Chabahar to the National Iranian Rail Road", enabling India to connect to Central Asia and Europe.

Iran invited India to develop a railway link from Chabahar to Bam, a city from where links to both Afghanistan and Turkmenistan could be made. Through the North-South Corridor (now called the INSTC), India would be linked through Iran to Russia as well.

In the latest agreement, India has promised an outlay of $120 million, and a credit line of $250 million to further develop the port. GETTY IMAGES

Afghanistan was always part of the conversation over Chabahar. The 2003 India-Iran joint statement recorded that "India and Iran have cooperated closely on Afghanistan, especially in the shared objective of ridding that country of the evil Taliban forces. We agreed that our joint effort should now be to promote strong construction and rehabilitation work in that country including through development of alternate trade routes to Afghanistan through Iran as well as by undertaking a joint rail and road reconstruction project."

Strategic location

For India that has traded with Iran through the Bandar Abbas port for centuries, Chabahar's chief attraction was not about its trade, but its location vis-à-vis Pakistan. Islamabad's constant resistance to allowing Indian trade to transit through to Afghanistan meant that the Chabahar route, through the Iranian border town of Zaranj, was the most viable alternative. In 2005, India also began the perilous construction of Route-606 or the Zaranj-Delaram Highway, which connected the border crossing from Iran to the rest of Afghanistan, in order to facilitate the trade. Its importance gleaned from the sacrifices made for it – as many as 135 personnel working on the highway were killed in attacks by the Taliban, including six Indian border road and ITBP personnel.

As a result, the Chabahar dream began to take shape as a hub of connectivity, with immense strategic potential as well as the desire to help Afghanistan, riven by bloodshed, to build a new future for itself. Over the years, Chabahar's progress was sporadic, constrained by the U.S.'s sanctions and demands on India to sever ties with Iran, and often spurred on by the challenge of China's competitive moves in the region. In 2012, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said she was having "very intense and very blunt" conversations with India and other countries urging them to join the U.S. in "isolating Iran" in a bid to pressure Tehran into acceding to terms for the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the multi-party nuclear deal.

India didn't concede to U.S. demands, and although buyers cut oil imports by around 20%, the government went ahead on Chabahar. In 2012, as China began its maritime forays in the Indian ocean, India sent its first shipment of 1,00,000 tonnes of wheat for Afghanistan to Chabahar port, using the rudimentary facilities there. In May 2013, three months after China announced it would develop Gwadar port off Karachi, External Affairs Minister Salman Khurshid flew to Tehran and announced that a trilateral partnership with Afghanistan was being readied, which would include the upgradation of Chabahar port.

In 2016, Prime Minister Narendra Modi joined Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani to sign the historic agreement, paving the way for India to invest $500 million to build the Shahid Beheshti terminal (one of the two terminals in the port) and a railway line to Zahedan. However, geopolitics played spoiler with Chabahar again. In 2018, U.S. President Donald Trump walked out of the JCPOA with Iran, and restored all sanctions in 2018.

Trouble in ties

While the Modi government was able to negotiate a 'carve-out' from sanctions for Chabahar as a means to support Afghanistan, it decided to cave in on other deals, and announced in 2019 that India had "zeroed out" all oil imports from Iran. The threat of sanctions slowed India's responses on the railway project to Zahedan, and in August 2020, Iran dropped India from the project, deciding to go it alone. Another big shift followed the Taliban takeover of Kabul in 2021, and while India has kept its commitment on sending humanitarian aid to Afghanistan via Chabahar, trade has been sluggish. Despite all that, the Shahid Beheshti terminal has handled 90,000 TEUs of container traffic, 2.5 million tonnes of wheat and other aid for Afghanistan, and supplied 40,000 litres of pesticide for Iran.

The latest agreement, signed on Monday, saw Indian Ports Global Ltd and Ports and Maritime Organisation of Iran sign a 10-year Long Term Contract in Tehran in the presence of Shipping Minister Sarbananda Sonowal and his Iranian counterpart, with India promising an outlay of $120 million, and another $250 million credit line to further develop the project. This will spur the next phase of Chabahar's development – with a plan to build 32 jetties and process about 82 million tonnes of cargo per year by the end of the fourth phase.

It remains to be seen whether the U.S. actually follows through on State Department comments raising the "risk of sanctions" against Indian companies participating in the contract, but the past few decades have shown that India's interest in the port will remain. While the dream of Chabahar, as envisioned decades ago, has yet to be realised and the project has moved at a glacial place, it is now an irreversible reality, one whose location and geopolitical positioning, like its name (spring around the year), lend it an eternal charm.

THE GIST

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Putin's war manager

Andrei Belousov

The appointment of the civilian economist as Russia's new Defence Minister shows the central position the economy has taken in the war on Ukraine

Adithya Narayan

ILLUSTRATION: R. RAJESH

Vladimir Putin's inauguration as Russian President for a fifth time has spawned a slew of political moves in the country. Andrei Belousov was made Defence Minister, replacing Sergei Shoigu, who was sent away to head the National Security Council – a position held by Mr. Putin's key ally Nikolai Patrushev, who will oversee shipbuilding going forward.

Russia's official position regarding the Cabinet reshuffle is that with the war in Ukraine under way for two years now, military spending resembles Soviet-era levels of the mid-1980s. This calls for a better integration of the defence Budget into the overall economy, which will be achieved by having a civilian economist, such as Mr. Belousov, at the helm.

However, from the outset, things seemed to be going in favour of Mr. Shoigu, for the Ukraine war had finally gathered momentum. After remaining largely stagnant since December 2022, the Russian Army began advancing on the battlefront, capturing close to 800 sq. km this year.

What then would have prompted Mr. Shoigu's transfer? Parse through the history and the full picture emerges. Like Mr. Belousov, Mr. Shoigu, too, hails from a civilian background. A civil engineer by profession, the 68-year-old started at the Emergency and Disaster Relief Department in the 1990s. Having proved his mettle there, Mr. Shoigu took over as Defence Minister in 2012. He orchestrated the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula in 2014 and masterminded Russia's military campaign in Syria to help Bashar al-Assad's regime.

Inner circle

His stature had grown by then and Mr. Shoigu became part of Mr. Putin's inner circle, even accompanying him on fishing trips. Speculation was rife that he would be considered a possible successor to Mr. Putin.

The first signs of trouble for Mr. Shoigu were visible with Russia's 'special military operation' in Ukraine that was launched on February 24, 2022. What was expected to be a quick campaign has dragged on for more than two years.

The period also witnessed economic sanctions by the West and a mutiny at home by Wagner chief Yevgeny Prigozhin against Mr. Shoigu and military chief Valery Gerasimov. The final nail came in April with the arrests of Mr. Shoigu's deputy Timur Ivanov on corruption charges and another senior official from the Defence Ministry.

This may lead to the impression that graft and inefficiency on the battlefield led to Mr. Shoigu's removal. But then not every head rolled.

Mr. Patrushev's son, Dmitry, has been promoted from Agriculture Minister to Deputy Prime Minister, and so is Mr. Putin's main financier Yuri Kovalchuk's son Boris, who is assigned to lead Russia's audit chamber.

By tying the prospects of next-generation leaders to the current political dispensation, analysts believe Mr. Putin is trying to neutralise potential threats from various quarters.

This makes Mr. Belousov, a civilian with a relatively low profile, the ideal candidate for Mr. Putin. The 65-year-old's stints, first as an Economic Development Minister and then as a Deputy Prime Minister, lend him enough heft to take on the role of Defence Minister. His interest in drones paints the picture of a technocrat, who can bring about the required 'innovation', which Russian officials believe is crucial to winning the war. His economic background should also help plug corruption and ensure money is allotted efficiently and effectively.

Most important, the fact that Mr. Belousov and Mr. Putin possess a set of shared beliefs, chief among which is an increased state role in the economy, solidifies his case. Mr. Belousov's efforts to this end – such as an increase in VAT in 2019 and a proposal to seize excess profit from 14 large metallurgical and chemical companies – must have caught the Russian President's attention.

By appointing an economist at the helm, the Russian President realises the role played by the economy during wartime. This means Mr. Belousov has his task cut out and will have to straddle the economy and the war optimally.

Universal cinema

Festival de Cannes

This year's edition is significant for India with the country ending its 30-year wait to compete for the Palme d'Or, or golden palm, the honour for the best film at the festival

Vighnesh P. Venkitesh

AFP

The world of cinema finds itself revolving around the Palais de Festivals hall in the quiet French Rivera city of Cannes every May when the Festival de Cannes opens its curtains. The longest running celebration of films in the world, the festival aims at "encouraging the development of the cinematographic art in all its forms" and fostering "spirit of collaboration between all film-producing countries".

The brainchild of French writer and art critic Philippe Erlanger, the festival first took shape in 1939 in the months leading up to the outbreak of the Second World War. Erlanger was a member of the jury for the Venice Mostra in 1938, held in Italy under the rule of Benito Mussolini. Erlanger and other members of the jury were outraged with the Mostra when it went against the jury's calls and awarded the Mussolini cup, the festival's top prize, to Nazi propaganda film *Olympia* and Italian film *Luciano Serra, pilota*.

After leaving the Mostra vowing not to return, Erlanger contacted French authorities to set up a rival festival before the next Mostra, and the authorities took it as a state affair. After much planning, the festival was scheduled to open at the Winter Casino in Cannes on September 1, 1939. But fears of an imminent war forced the invitees to leave Cannes.

Germany invaded Poland on the day the festival was scheduled to begin, leaving authorities with no choice but to postpone. The declaration of war two days later meant the end for the first edition which only screened William Dieterle's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* in a private screening. The six-year war did not dampen Erlanger's spirit, and the festival began again with its second first edition on September 20, 1946.

Having been born under such dramatic fashion symbolising resistance to Fascism and growing along with the post-war Europe, Cannes festival soon became the meeting point of arthouse movies from around the world.

But Cannes got its reputation not from the countless masterpieces it premiered and screened year after year, but from a disrupted edition that was forced to shut down without completion. In 1968, while France was reeling under nationwide student protests, Jean-Luc Godard and Francois Truffaut, pioneers of French new wave cinema, led a group of directors and jury members to disrupt proceedings at Cannes in solidarity with the students.

"We are talking solidarity with students and workers, and you are talking about dolly shots and close ups," Godard said, during the commotion, kicking off the perennial debate about the nature of cinema's relation with society.

History of resistance

This edition of the festival is not short of its own contributions to the rich history of resistance and solidarity the festival holds. Iranian director Mohammad Rasoulof, whose film *The Seed of the Sacred Fig*, was scheduled to be screened, is facing an eight-year prison sentence in Iran for his public statements. He managed to flee the country in silence days before the festival's opening. *The Guardian* reported he walked across the border after discarding all trackable devices and has found shelter in Germany.

This edition is also taking place against the backdrop of a #metoo campaign making waves in France, with director Judith Godrèche premiering her short film *Moi Aussi* (Me too), months after she alleged two prominent filmmakers sexually abused her when she was a teenager. This year's festival is significant for India with the country ending its 30-year long wait to compete for the Palme d'Or, the honour for the best movie at the festival. India had made its mark at the fest in its inaugural edition itself, with Chetan Anand's *Neecha Nagar* sharing the best picture award. Now *All We Imagine As Light*, a Malayalam movie directed by Payal Kapadia, is lining up against the likes of Yorgos Lanthimos's *Kinds of Kindness* and Francis Ford Coppola's *Megalopolis* for the major prize.

The last time an Indian movie competed for the prize was in 1994 with another Malayalam movie *Swaham*, directed by Shaji N. Karun.

JERUSALEM

Israel Army says body of one hostage retrieved from Gaza

AFP

The Israeli Army said on Saturday that troops retrieved the body of hostage Ron Benjamin from the Gaza Strip after he was "murdered" during the October 7 attack by Hamas. His body was recovered in the same operation that saw troops retrieve the remains of three other hostages, which was announced on Friday. AFP

PARIS

Latest execution in Iran sees two women among 7 hung to death

AFP

Iran on Saturday hanged at least seven persons, including two women, while a member of its Jewish minority is at imminent risk of execution as the Islamic republic further intensified its use of capital punishment, the Norway-based Iran Human Rights (IHR) said. At least 223 execution were carried out this year in Iran. AFP

NIAMEY

Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger finalise regional alliance project

AFP

Junta-run Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger have finalised plans to form a confederation after turning their backs on former colonial ruler France to seek closer ties with Russia. Their Foreign Ministers met on Friday in Niger's capital Niamey to agree on a text establishing the Confederation of the Alliance of Sahel States. AFP

KABUL

Three Spaniards, three Afghans killed in shooting in Afghanistan

AP

The bodies of three Spanish tourists and three Afghans shot dead while visiting a market in Afghanistan were transported to the capital along with multiple wounded. The group was fired on while walking through the bazaar in Bamiyan in central Afghanistan, around 180 km from the capital Kabul on Friday. AFP

New divisions among Israeli leaders over governance of post-war Gaza

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defence Minister Yoav Gallant have conflicting visions for Gaza's future; experts say the confusion serves to benefit Hamas, which says no new authority can be set up without its involvement

Agence France-Presse
JERUSALEM

New divisions have emerged among Israel's leaders over post-war Gaza's governance, with an unexpected Hamas fightback in parts of the Palestinian territory piling pressure on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

The Israeli Army has been battling Hamas militants across Gaza for more than seven months while also exchanging near-daily fire with Iran-backed Hezbollah forces along the northern border with Lebanon.

But after Hamas fighters regrouped in northern Gaza, where Israel previously said the group had been neutralised, broad splits emerged in the Israeli war cabinet in recent days.

Dystopian strip: Displaced Palestinians walk along a devastated street in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip on Saturday. AFP

Mr. Netanyahu came under personal attack from Defence Minister Yoav Gallant for failing to rule out an Israeli government in Gaza after the war.

The Israeli Premier's outright rejection of post-war Palestinian leadership in Gaza has broken a rift among top politicians wide open and frustrated relations with top ally the U.S.

Experts say the lack of clarity only serves to benefit Hamas, whose leader has insisted no new authority can be established in the territory without its involvement.

"Without an alternative to fill the vacuum, Hamas will continue to grow," International Crisis Group analyst Mairav Zonszein said.

Emmanuel Navon, a lecturer at Tel Aviv University, echoed this sentiment.

"If only Hamas is left in Gaza, of course they are going to appear here and there and the Israeli Army will be forced to chase them around," Mr. Navon said.

"Either you establish an Israeli military government or an Arab-led government."

U.S. pressure

Mr. Gallant said in a televised address on Wednesday: "I call on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to make a decision and declare that Israel will not establish civilian control over the Gaza strip."

The Premier's war planning also came under recent attack by Army chief Herzi Halevi as well as top Shin Bet security agency officials.

Russia orders seizure of Deutsche Bank, UniCredit assets

Agence France-Presse
MOSCOW

The company RusKhimAlians sued both firms after it could not set up a gas processing plant

A Russian court has ruled that Deutsche Bank and UniCredit's assets in the country are to be seized, documents showed.

European banks have largely exited Russia after Moscow launched its offensive on Ukraine in 2022.

A court in Saint Petersburg ruled in favour of seizing €239 million from Deutsche Bank, documents dated May 16 showed. The same day, it ordered the seizure of around €463 million of assets belonging to Italy's UniCredit.

Both decisions were issued in answer to a request from RusKhimAlians, which was planning to build a major gas processing plant in cooperation with German company Linde, which pulled out of the project due to Russia's military campaign.

RusKhimAlians sued UniCredit and Deutsche Bank – both guarantors of the project.

Deutsche Bank said it would "need to see how this claim is implemented by the Russian courts and assess the immediate operational impact in Russia". UniCredit said it "has been made aware" of the decision and was "reviewing" the situation in detail.

Myanmar rebel group claims control of town

Agence France-Presse
BANGKOK

A Myanmar ethnic minority armed group on Saturday claimed its fighters had seized control of a town in western Rakhine state, in what would be another blow to the junta.

Clashes have rocked Rakhine since the Arakan Army (AA) attacked security forces in November, ending a ceasefire that had largely held since the 2021 military coup.

"We seized all bases of the Myanmar Army in Buthidaung," in northern Rakhine state, the AA said on its Telegram channel on Saturday.

Its fighters were still clashing with junta troops outside the town, the Arakan Army said.

South African government for speedy issuance of visas for Indian tourists

K. S. Sudhi
DURBAN

The South African government is evolving mechanisms for the speedy clearance of visa applications from India and working on a proposal for introducing e-visa for Indian tourists to the country, Patricia de Lille, Minister for Tourism, has said.

Speaking to media persons on the sidelines of the just concluded Africa Indaba, the South African tourism fair, recently, Ms. Lille said the first quarter of 2024 saw 16,000 Indian visitors reaching the country. The event was organised by South Africa Tourism.

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa has sought a joint report from the Ministers of Tourism, Home Affairs and State Security on the measures for the speedy clearance of visas. The Tourism Ministry has taken up a proposal for a visa waiver for up to 90 days for passengers from both China and India with the President, she said.

Currently, passengers from Russia and Brazil get a visa waiver up to 90 days in one calendar year. They also have the option to apply for an extension of visa while in South Africa. The facility shall be extended to passengers from both India and China, who are also members of the BRICS alliance, she said.

Ms. Lille, who was in Goa during the recent G-20 meeting, felt the e-visa system was not delivering the desired results for tourists from both India and China. At times, people have to leave their passports with the South African embassies for up to 25 days. The Tourism Ministry has set up a facilitation centre in the office of the Minister to help people get their visas as soon as possible, she said.

The South African government has engaged South African Airways to operate more flights to India. The national carrier has not fully recovered from the impacts of COVID-19. Johannesburg-Mumbai is one of the routes that the company has not been able to revive since COVID. The government is hoping to strike a deal with Air India to operate more flights, she said.

(The correspondent is in Durban on an invitation from South African Tourism)

Sri Lankan Tamils meet in Mullaivaikkal to mark 15th anniversary of final battle

Meera Srinivasan
MULLAITIVU

Thousands of Tamils on Saturday converged in Mullaivaikkal, along Sri Lanka's northeastern coast, to pay homage to their relatives killed in May 2009, in the final battle of the island's protracted civil war.

As the war escalated before its gruesome end, lakhs of Tamil civilians were pushed to this narrow strip of land, declared a 'No Fire Zone' by the government. Tens of thousands, including women and children, died in the indiscriminate shelling by the armed forces, while scores were injured.

Families gathered at the venue on Saturday and placed photographs of their loved ones in the sandy ground near the sea, offered prayers with flowers, food, and by lighting lamps. Antony Jesurathnam Mariapushparani, a Mullaitivu resident, has vivid images from May 18, fifteen years ago.

"Only those of us who were here know how many children died, how many senior citizens died. I saw how they just stacked up bodies in tractors and dropped them here," she said. Pointing to the main road adjacent to the venue, she said, "it was there that we had our last *kanji* (porridge)."

To recall those desperate times, many Tamils prepare and serve *kanji* in the run-up to May 18, marking the period as 'Mullivaikkal remembrance week', or as 'Tamil Genocide Remembrance Day'. Earlier this week, four Tamils were arrested in the Eastern Province while they were serving *kanji*, after the police obtained a court order citing reasons of "public health" and revival of "terrorist activities". The three women and a man were granted bail on Friday.

"Sri Lanka's Government must take meaningful action to determine and disclose the fates and whereabouts of tens of thousands of people who have been subjected to enforced disappearance over the decades and hold those responsible to account," a UN Human Rights Office report said this week. Further, it called on Colombo to acknowledge "the involvement of State security forces and affiliated paramilitary groups, and to issue a public apology."

Sport

Heavy fog delays restart; Schauffele leads Morikawa by one stroke

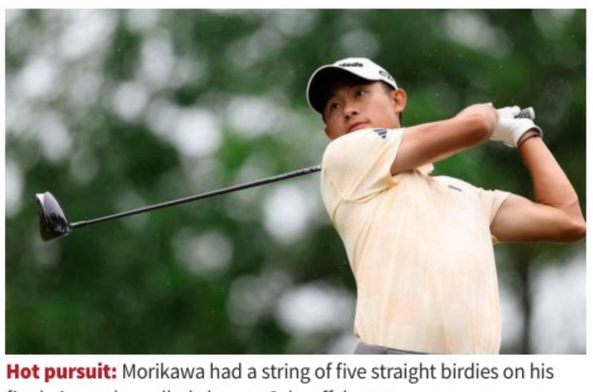
PGA CHAMPIONSHIP

Agence France-Presse
LOUISVILLE

Heavy fog has delayed Saturday's restart of the second round of the 106th PGA Championship at Valhalla and changed how players will be grouped for round three.

The final 17 players still on the course on Friday when darkness halted play, must complete their last holes before the cut can be made and groups can be determined for round three.

Xander Schauffele leads the field on 12-under par 136 after 36 holes with fellow American Collin Morikawa one stroke behind and countryman Sahith Theegala two back.



Hot pursuit: Morikawa had a string of five straight birdies on his final nine as he pulled close to Schauffele. AFP

Scottie Scheffler, who fired a five-under 66 on Friday after being arrested in the early morning, shares fourth on 133 with fellow Americans Bryson DeChambeau and Mark Hubbard and Belgium's Thomas Detry. Viktor Hovland of Norway (66), Austin Eckroat (67) and Tony Finau (69) are four off the lead at 8 under. The cut is expected to be one-under, which at this point would put 79 golfers into the weekend. It would mark just the third Major to ever have a cut line that was under par, joining the 1990 Open Championship at St. Andrews and the 2006 Open at Royal Liverpool.

Notable players expected to miss the cut include Spaniard Jon Rahm (par), Adam Scott of Australia (3 over), Wyndham Clark (4 over), Phil Mickelson (4 over) and Tiger Woods (7 over).

Top scores: 130: Xander Schauffele 62-68; **131:** Collin Morikawa 66-65; **132:** Sahith Theegala 65-67; **133:** Bryson DeChambeau 68-65, Mark Hubbard 65-68, Scottie Scheffler 67-66, Thomas Detry 66-67; **134:** Viktor Hovland 68-66, Tony Finau 65-69, Austin Eckroat 67-67.

Leverkusen stays invincible; Stuttgart overtakes Bayern Munich to second

BUNDESLIGA

Agence France-Presse
LEVERKUSEN

Bayer Leverkusen has become the first team in Bundesliga history to go through a season unbeaten after a 2-1 home win over Augsburg on Saturday, extending its season-long run to 51 games without defeat.

Stuttgart won 4-0 at home against Borussia M'Gladbach, leapfrogging Bayern Munich, which lost 4-2 to Hoffenheim, into second spot.

Borussia Dortmund veteran Marco Reus signed off in impressive style in his last home match in a 4-0 win over Darmstadt.

On a high: Xabi Alonso, head coach of Bayer Leverkusen, leads the gala celebrations. GETTY IMAGES

The results: Borussia Dortmund 4 (Maatsen 30, Reus 38, Brandt 72, Malen 88) bt SV Darmstadt 0; Union Berlin 2 (Hollerbach 68, Haberer 90+3) bt SC Freiburg 1 (Doan 85); Bayer Leverkusen 2 (Boniface 12, Andrich 27) bt Augsburg 1 (Komur 62); Eintracht Frankfurt 2 (Ekitike 60, Marmoush 78-pen) drew with RB Leipzig 2 (Simons 42-pen, Sesko 46); VfL Wolfsburg 1 (Paredes 18) lost to Mainz 3 (Gruda 24, van den Berg 71, Burkardt 85); Hoffenheim 4 (Beier 8, Kramaric 68, 85, 87) bt Bayern Munich 2 (Tel 4, Davies 6); Werder Bremen 4 (Friedl 6, Jung 78, Stage 80, Schmid 87) bt VfL Bochum 1 (Antwi-Adjei 84); Stuttgart 4 (Guirassy 23, 31, Jeong 75, Wamangituka 83) bt Borussia M'Gladbach 0; Heidenheim 4 (Dinkci 16, 22, Sessa 36, Beste 78) bt FC Cologne 1 (Tigges 64).

AUGURS WELL

Heartening to see India captain Rohit bat the way he did: Gavaskar

R.V. MOORTHY

Sunil Gavaskar said Rohit Sharma's return to form augurs well for India. "It's very heartening to see Rohit, the India captain, bat the way he did. That's exactly what you want. You want Rohit to be set the team off to a good start, so that the lower-order batters can come in and finish it off," Gavaskar told *Star Sports*.

SLOW OVER-RATE

MI skipper Hardik suspended; will miss his first match in IPL 2025

K. MURALI KUMAR

MI skipper Hardik Pandya has been fined ₹30 lakh and suspended from his team's opening match of IPL 2025 for the third slow over-rate offence in this edition. With MI's IPL-17 campaign ending on Friday, Hardik's suspension will only come into effect during his team's first game next season.

HELMOT'S TAKE

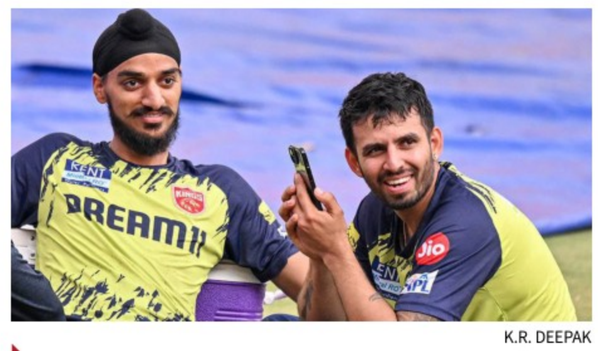
'We'll go in with confidence that we've played enough good cricket'

FILE PHOTO: K.R. DEEPAK

SRH assistant coach Simon Helmot sounded confident ahead of his side's match against PBKS. "Where we do have confidence is that we've played some pretty good cricket in the home-and-away fixtures. We'll go in with a positive mindset as we've played enough quality cricket to make the playoffs," Helmot said.

NO BACKING OUT

We will play fearless cricket, says Punjab Kings skipper Jitesh



K.R. DEEPAK

PBKS stand-in skipper Jitesh Sharma said the team was more positive than before and had nothing to lose, stressing that the side was known for its fearless brand of cricket. "The mood is good. I agree that we have been inconsistent this season, but we have also played some very good cricket," said Jitesh.

Royal Challengers dethrone Super Kings, enter playoffs

Kohli, du Plessis set up the foundation with a 78-run opening stand before Patidar, Green sustain the momentum to pilot the team to 218; Jadeja, Dhoni's best efforts not enough to save the campaign

IPL-17

N. Sudarshan
BENGALURU

When Royal Challengers Bengaluru went on a five-match winning run after hanging on to its fingernails for much of the season, even its most ardent fans wouldn't have believed that their team's stars had aligned.

But, on Saturday at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium, the most definitive proof for it emerged as RCB beat Chennai Super Kings by 27 runs to qualify for the playoffs.

Rain didn't play spoilsport as it was expected to. RCB lost the toss and yet put on a splendid batting show. And even the best efforts of Ravindra Jadeja (42 n.o., 22b, 3x4, 3x6) and M.S. Dhoni (25, 13b, 3x4, 1x6) couldn't salvage things for CSK.

RCB made 218, effectively setting CSK 201 to qualify. Jadeja and Dhoni took their side from 129 for six after 15 overs to 184 after 19. When Dhoni smashed the first ball of Yash Dayal's last over out of the ground, it appeared as if RCB had contrived to miss out. But Dayal dismissed Dhoni and held his nerve to carry his side through. CSK, in fact, appeared well placed at 85 for two with Rachin Ravindra (61b, 37b, 5x4, 3x6) and Ajinkya Rahane (33, 22b, 3x4, 1x6) batting. But it slumped to 119 for five as Lockie Ferguson prised out Rahane, Shivam Dube struggled (7, 15b) and Ravindra was run out. Dhoni and Jadeja brought CSK close, but it was not to be.

Earlier, RCB's PowerPlay (42 runs) was punctuated by a 41-minute rain break and batting on either side seemed like chalk and cheese. The ball gripped and turned after the interruption as Maheesh Theekshana and Mitchell Santner revelled.

Only when the length was marginally fuller did the scoreboard tick, with Kohli (47, 29b, 3x4, 4x6) collecting two slog-swept sixes. A third such attempt to hit against the turn, however, cost him.

Rajat Patidar joined skipper Faf du Plessis (54, 39b, 3x4, 3x6) and was quickly off the blocks, smashing Theekshana over long-off and Simarjeet Singh over fine-leg. But an unfortunate run out ended du Plessis' stay, curtailing an ominous-looking association.

Cameron Green (38 n.o., 17b, 3x4, 3x6) and Patidar (41, 23b, 2x4, 4x6) put on 71 off just 28 balls, with Ruturaj Gaikwad even dropping the burly Australian on 18.

Cameos from Dinesh Karthik (14, 6b, 1x4, 1x6) and Glenn Maxwell (16, 5b, 2x4, 1x6) gave RCB the cushion which ultimately proved worthy of qualification.

Fantastic Faf: du Plessis' stunning catch to send back Santner epitomised Royal Challengers' grit and determination as they extended their winning run to six. K. BHAGYA PRAKASH

SCOREBOARD

ROYAL CHALLENGERS
Virat Kohli c Mitchell b Santner 47 (*29b, 3x4, 4x6*), Faf du Plessis run out 54 (*39b, 3x4, 3x6*), Rajat Patidar c Mitchell b Shardul 41 (*23b, 2x4, 4x6*), Cameron Green (not out) 38 (*17b, 3x4, 3x6*), Dinesh Karthik c Dhoni b Deshpande 14 (*6b, 1x4, 1x6*), Glenn Maxwell c Dhoni b Shardul 16 (*5b, 2x4, 1x6*), Mahipal Lomror (not out) 0 (*1b*); Extras (lb-1, w-7): 8; Total (for five wkts. in 20 overs): 218.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-78 (Kohli, 9.4 overs), 2-113 (du Plessis, 12.6), 3-184 (Patidar, 17.4), 4-201 (Karthik, 18.5), 5-218 (Maxwell, 19.5).

SUPER KINGS BOWLING
Deshpande 4-0-49-1, Shardul 4-0-61-2, Theekshana 4-0-25-0, Santner 4-0-23-1, Jadeja 3-0-40-0, Simarjeet 1-0-19-0.

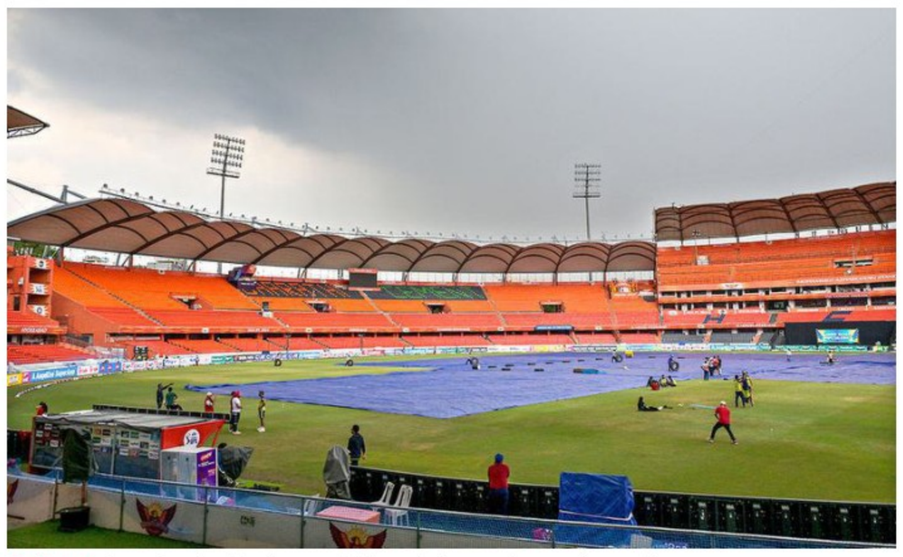
CHENNAI SUPER KINGS
Ruturaj Gaikwad c Dayal b Maxwell 0 (*1b*), Rachin Ravindra run out 61 (*37b, 5x4, 3x6*), Daryl Mitchell c Kohli b Dayal 4 (*6b*), Ajinkya Rahane c du Plessis b Ferguson 33 (*22b, 3x4, 1x6*), Shivam Dube **(Impact Player in place of Theekshana)** c Ferguson b Green 7 (*15b*), Ravindra Jadeja (not out) 42 (*22b, 3x4, 3x6*), Mitchell Santner c du Plessis b Siraj 3 (*4b*), M.S. Dhoni c Swapnil b Dayal 25 (*13b, 3x4, 1x6*), Shardul Thakur (not out) 1 (*2b*); Extras (b-4, lb-1, nb-2, w-8): 15; Total (for seven wkts. in 20 overs): 191.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-0 (Ruturaj, 0.1), 2-19 (Mitchell, 2.2), 3-85 (Rahane, 9.1), 4-115 (Ravindra, 12.6), 5-119 (Dube, 13.4), 6-129 (Santner, 14.6), 7-190 (Dhoni, 19.2).

RCB BOWLING
Maxwell 4-0-25-1, Siraj 4-0-35-1, Dayal 4-0-42-2, Swapnil **(Impact Player in the place of Patidar)** 2-0-13-0, Karn 1-0-14-0, Ferguson 3-0-39-1, Green 2-0-18-1.

Toss: CSK; **PoM:** du Plessis.
RCB won by 27 runs.

Confident Sunrisers take on a depleted Kings



Ominous: Come Sunday, Sunrisers could have their second successive wash-out. K.R. DEEPAK

V.V. Subrahmanyam
HYDERABAD

Sunrisers Hyderabad, which has already qualified for the playoffs, takes on a depleted Punjab Kings in its last IPL league match at the Rajiv Gandhi Stadium here on Sunday afternoon.

Sunrisers, with 15 points from 13 outings, should look to claim full points against a team which will not have the services of key players like Sam Curran, who led the team in the absence of injured Shikhar Dhawan, and hard-hitting Jonny Bairstow in what should be yet another good IPL wicket if the weather stays clear.

Importantly, the home side played its last game on May 8 when it drubbed Lucknow Super Giants by 10 wickets and with many players taking a long break, it will be interesting to see how quickly they regain the momentum ahead of the playoffs.

Imposing batters
For most of the league so far, Sunrisers relied heavily on the imposing batting line-up. And, to its delight, the senior pro Bhuvneshwar Kumar was back at his best in the last few games, providing the crucial breakthroughs in the company of captain Pat Cummins and left-armers T. Natarajan and Jaydev Unadkat.

On form, it should be an easy outing for the Cummins' men against PBKS.

On the other hand, Kings' pacers Arshdeep Singh, and Harshal Patel – who is the leading wicket-taker with 22 wickets in the IPL this season – hold the key in keeping a check on the run-flow with leggie Rahul Chahar expected to raise the bar.

In batting, Kings badly need the likes of Prabhsimran Singh, Shashank Singh, captain Jitesh Sharma, and Ashutosh Sharma to score big for the bowlers to have a go.

Samson's men seek elusive win to seal Qualifier 1 spot

Santadeep Dey
GUWAHATI

An alert from the National Disaster Management Authority bears grim prognoses about impending thunderstorms, rain, and gusty wind for the residents here ahead of Rajasthan Royals versus Kolkata Knight Riders, Indian Premier League's last group-stage fixture.

That the match at Barsapara Stadium may end up deciding whether Sanju Samson's men finish in the top two, may have the dugout addressing a prayer or two to the weather gods.

How things are
With Royal Challengers Bengaluru being the latest entrant, the top four are now decided. The mathematics also has become quite simple. Even if Sunrisers Hyderabad wins its day game against Punjab Kings, RR can still finish second by beating KKR.

If Sunday's contest does get underway, death overs are where Samson's team needs to metamorphose into its full glory. RR has not only scored 71 runs more than KKR between the 16th and 20th over, but it has also picked 24 wickets, a touch better than KKR's 21. RR will also carry a psychological advantage for it pulled off a record chase to prevail the last time these two sides met.

An interesting duel to look forward to will be the one between spinners Varun Chakaravarthy and Yuzvendra Chahal in the middle overs. While Varun has picked 16 wickets, the most by any bowler in 2024 between overs seven and 16, Chahal has accounted for 15.

KKR will not have Phil Salt, who has flown back to England on national duty, in the eleven. He is the side's second-highest run-scorer this season (435). Although Afghanistan's Rahmanullah Gurbaz will be an ideal like-for-like replacement, Shreyas Iyer and Co. haven't officially named anybody.

Swing factor: Ashwin will look to turn things around for Royals. PTI

Today's matches

SRH vs PBKS	RR vs KKR
Hyderabad, 3.30 p.m.	**Guwahati,** 7.30 p.m.
HEAD-TO-HEAD	HEAD-TO-HEAD
Played: 22	Played: 28
SRH 15 | PBKS 7	RR 14 | KKR 14
PREVIOUS MEETING	PREVIOUS MEETING
SRH won by two runs, 2024	RR won by two wickets, 2024

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD) & JIO CINEMA

I'm terrible at reading pitches: Sangakkara

Santadeep Dey
GUWAHATI

Kumar Sangakkara, Rajasthan Royals' Director of Cricket, feels that the track at his side's 'adopted home' here is better than it seemed during the previous fixture against Punjab Kings.

On the eve of Indian Premier League's final league game against table-topper Kolkata Knight Riders at the Barsapara Stadium, Sangakkara said: "I'm terrible at reading pitches. I leave that up to the curators, who know more than I do. I thought the last track was very good. Both sides did not bat as well as they would have wanted, especially us. I think we could have got 170-180, comfortably, so it's not the fault of the pitch really."

Both PBKS and RR representatives, Nathan Ellis and Shane Bond respectively, had remarked that the wicket had behaved slower than expected at the post-match press conference on Wednesday.

Trade secret
Meanwhile, KKR management has decided to keep its cards close to its chest regarding the potential replacement of wicketkeeper-batter Phil Salt, who's returned to England on national duty.

Batter Ramandeep Singh said: "He has been an integral part of the campaign. I am sure whoever replaces him will also do well because all of us have been putting in the hard yards. The eleven will be announced at the toss tomorrow."

Points Table

	M	W	L	NR	PTS	NRR
Kolkata Knight Riders (Q)	13	9	3	1	19	1.428
Rajasthan Royals (Q)	13	8	5	0	16	0.273
Sunrisers Hyderabad (Q)	13	7	5	1	15	0.406
Royal Challengers (Q)	14	7	7	0	14	0.459
Chennai Super Kings	14	7	7	0	14	0.392
Delhi Capitals	14	7	7	0	14	-0.377
Lucknow Super Giants	14	7	7	0	14	-0.667
Gujarat Titans	14	5	7	2	12	-1.063
Punjab Kings	13	5	8	0	10	-0.347
Mumbai Indians	14	4	10	0	8	-0.318

Q: Qualified

A BG-BGE

INBRIEF

Zverev sets up Rome final date with Jarry

Germany's Alexander Zverev equalled compatriot Boris Becker's record by reaching an 11th Masters final on Friday when he ended the Rome Open giant-killing run of Alejandro Tabilo to set-up a title showdown against Nicolas Jarry.

The results: Men (semifinals): Alexander Zverev bt Alejandro Tabilo 1-6, 7-6(4), 6-2; Nicolas Jarry bt Tommy Paul 6-3, 6-7(3), 6-3.

Indian girls finish eighth in Billie Jean King Cup

India was beaten 0-2 by Kazakhstan and New Zealand in back-to-back positional matches and was pushed to the eighth spot in the Asia-Oceania Junior Billie Jean King Cup under-16 girls' tennis tournament in Shymkent, Kazakhstan.

The results (seventh place): Kazakhstan bt India 2-0 (Albina Kakenova bt Yashika Shokeen 6-4, 6-3; Ariana Gogulina bt Maaya Rajeshwaran 7-6(4), 6-2).
Position 5-8: New Zealand bt India 2-0 (Lucia Gale bt Diya Ramesh 6-4, 6-0; Aishi Das bt Maaya Rajeshwaran 6-4, 6-2).

Sevilla confirms coach will leave, offers Navas lifetime deal

Sevilla confirmed on Saturday that coach Quique Sanchez Flores will leave at the end of the season and it wanted to keep departing captain Jesus Navas. The record seven-time Europa League winner is languishing in 12th in La Liga, although when Sanchez Flores was called in December it was in 16th. Sanchez Flores' contract was set to expire in June 2025 but Sevilla chief said both parties agreed the coach will depart.

Punjab FC caps incredible run with RFDL Trophy

Punjab FC emerged the Reliance Foundation Development League (RFDL) champion with a 3-2 win over East Bengal FC in the final at the Reliance Corporate Park in Mumbai on Saturday. Punjab capped a remarkable run which saw it remain unbeaten in the 16 matches (14 wins, two draws) across the regional qualifiers, National group stage, and the National championship.

The result (final): Punjab FC 3 (Omang Dodum 10, Yendrembam Boby Singh 59, Harmanpreet Singh 72) bt East Bengal FC 2 (Guite Vanlalpeka 30, Joseph Justin 50).

Ramita brightens chance for Paris Games ticket

Rookie Sandeep emerges the leader with an unbeatable average in the men's air rifle; Manu climbs to the top in the women's air pistol event while Rhythm is second best

SHOOTING

Sports Bureau

Ramita Jindal shot 636.4 in air rifle to brighten her chances for a ticket to Paris in the fourth Olympic shooting trials in Bhopal on Saturday.

Yet, Ramita may not be able to celebrate as Elavenil Valarivan, with a deemed Olympic quota bonus of one point, and Olympic quota winner Tilottama Sen, may just nose ahead of her when the averages are worked out after the finals on Sunday.

What was clear was that Mehuli Ghosh did not have the scores to back her claim for a Paris ticket even though she shot an impressive 633.1.

On the podium: Niraj and Aishwary Pratap Tomar finished first and third in the 50m rifle 3-position event. RITU RAJ KONWAR

Close fight

Equally intriguing was the scenario in men's air rifle in which rookie Sandeep Singh was the leader with an unbeatable average, while Olympic quota winners Arjun Babuta and Rudrankksh Patil looked to be locked in a close fight for the second berth, with the averages working in favour of Babuta.

Can we afford to drop the World champion on a decimal difference, or deny a rookie from gunning for an Olympic medal on his rightful spot are questions that the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) selection committee would face before it finalises the Olympic squad.

There was no such doubt in women's air pistol as Manu Bhaker, who had already ensured her spot in sports pistol, climbed to the top following 581. Rhythm Sangwan shot 572, her lowest in four trials, but had done enough earlier to be the second best ahead of Surbhi Rao, Esha Singh and Palak Gulia.

In men's air pistol, Sarabjot Singh and Arjun Singh Cheema finished strongly to be clearly ahead of Olympic quota winner Varun Tomar, Ravinder Singh and Naveen.

The results:
10m air pistol: Men: 1. Sarabjot Singh 584; 2. Arjun Singh Cheema 583; 3. Varun Tomar 577; 4. Ravinder Singh 576; 5. Naveen 574.
Women: 1. Manu Bhaker 581; 2. Surbhi Rao 577; 3. Palak Gulia 573; 4. Rhythm Sangwan 572; 5. Esha Singh 572.
10m air rifle: Men: 1. Sri Karthik Sabari Raj 631.6; 2. Rudrankksh Patil 630.6; 3. Divyansh Singh Panwar 630.2; 4. Sandeep Singh 628.3; 5. Arjun Babuta 624.7.
Women: 1. Ramita Jindal 636.4; 2. Mehuli Ghosh 633.1; 3. Elavenil Valarivan 633.0; 4. Nancy Mandhotra 630.6; 5. Tilottama Sen 628.8.
50m rifle 3-position: Men: 1. Niraj Kumar 462.9 (586); 2. Chain Singh 461.2 (586); 3. Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar 449.8 (591); 4. Swapnil Kusale 439.0 (573); 5. Akhil Sheoran 423.8 (586).
Women: 1. Sift Kaur Samra 461.3 (593); 2. Nischal 460.3 (587); 3. Ashi Chouksey 448.1 (577); 4. Shriyanka Sadangi 438.0 (580); 5. Anjum Moudgil 427.2 (588).

Langer will not apply for India's head coach job

CRICKET

Shayan Acharya
MUMBAI

Justin Langer is unlikely to apply for India's head coach job despite having quite an impressive resume in international cricket.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is on the lookout for a new head coach with incumbent Rahul Dravid deciding to step down at the end of India's T20 World Cup campaign in June.

While there have been several names doing the rounds – including that of Gautam Gambhir – there was speculation that Langer might also throw his hat in the fray.

However, the Australian coach indicated on Friday that he may not be in the race.

Biggest job

"It would almost be the biggest job in cricket being the head coach of the Indian cricket team because of the huge volume of cricket, the huge expectation. It would be a great challenge, it would be great fun. It would be a wonderful opportunity to win ICC titles, but with all these things, the timing has gotta be right," Langer said.

Langer. FILE PHOTO: SANDEEP SAXENA

> It would be a great challenge, it would be great fun... the pressure on winning for the Indian team is massive

"I did four or so years with the Australian cricket team. It's all-encompassing. It is exhausting and I think someone else like Rahul Dravid will probably tell you the same thing, Ravi Shastri will tell you the same thing.

"The pressure on winning for the Indian team is massive.

"So. I'm sure the next person who gets the job will be really looking forward to the project," Langer, who coached Lucknow Super Giants in the IPL this year, said.

Satwik-Chirag combination moves into the final

BADMINTON

Press Trust of India
BANGKOK

R. Satwiksairaj and Chirag Shetty entered the final of the Thailand Open badminton with a 21-11, 21-12 victory over Lu Ming-Che and Tang Kai-Wei of Chinese Taipei in the last-four clash on Saturday.

The top-seeded Indian pair will be up against the Chinese duo of Chen Bo Yang and Liu Yi, who defeated Kim Gi Jung and Kim Sa Rang of South Korea 21-19, 21-18 in the other last-four contest.

In a jiffy: Satwik and Chirag put it across Lu Ming-Che and Tang Kai-Wei of Chinese Taipei in just 35 minutes. FILE PHOTO

Nikhat, Minakshi strike gold, India finishes with 12 medals

BOXING

Press Trust of India
ASTANA

Nikhat Zareen and Minakshi clinched a gold each as the Indian team concluded its Elorda Cup boxing campaign with a best-ever tally of 12 medals here on Saturday.

Besides Nikhat and Minakshi's gold medals, Indians won two silver and eight bronze to better the last edition's record of five medals.

Nikhat (52kg) outclassed Zhazira Urakbayeva of Kazakhstan with an unanimous 5-0 scoreline while Minakshi defeated Uzbekistan's Rahmonova Saidahon 4-1 in the 48kg bout final.

Anamika (50kg) and Manisha (60kg) lost in their respective finals to end with silver medals.

The Indian medallists:
Gold: Minakshi (48kg), Nikhat Zareen (52kg).
Silver: Anamika (50kg), Manisha (60kg).
Bronze, men: Yaiphaba Singh Soibam (48kg), Abhishek Yadav (67kg), Vishal (86kg), Gaurav Chauhan (92+kg).
Women: Sonu (63kg), Manju Bamboriya (66kg), Shalakha Singh Sansanwal (70kg), Monika (81+kg).

Nikhat. FILE PHOTO

Foden. GETTY IMAGES

Foden named Premier League player of the season

Agence France-Presse
LONDON

Manchester City's Phil Foden has been named the Premier League's Player of the Season.

Saturday's announcement means the 23-year-old England midfielder completes an awards double after being voted Footballer of the Year by the English Football Writers' Association earlier this month.

Aravindh stays in joint lead

CHESS

Press Trust of India
SHARJAH

Indian Grandmaster Aravindh Chithambaram kept himself in joint lead after a draw with Iranian Amin Tabatabaei in the fourth round of Sharjah Masters chess tournament here.

Chithamabaram took his tally to 3.5 points out of a possible four and shares the lead with local star A.R. Saleh Salem and Hans Moke Niemann of United States in the $52,000 prize money tournament.

Second straight win

With five rounds still to come, top seed and world number seven Arjun Erigaise of India is not far behind the leaders with his second straight victory coming at the expense of Manuel Petrosyan of Armenia.

Giving Arjun company on three points are compatriot Abhimanyu Puranik and Sankalp Gupta who both drew their matches against Sam Shankland of United States and Russian talent Volodar Murzin respectively.

Important results (round 4):
A.R. Saleh Salem (3.5) drew with Hans Moke Niemann (3.5); Amin Tabatabaei (3) drew with Aravindh Chithambaram (3.5); Sam Shankland (3) drew with Abhimanyu Puranik (3); Volodar Murzin (3) drew with Sankalp Gupta (3).
Manuel Petrosyan (2) lost to Arjun Erigaisi (3); Maurizzi Marc'andria (2.5) drew with P. Iniyan (2.5); Nihal Sarin (2.5) bt Mihail Nikitenko (1.5).
V. Pranav (2) drew with Haik Martirosyan (2); Luca Moroni Jr (2) drew with Raunak Sadhwani (2); Sanal Vahap (1.5) lost to Leon Luke Mendonca (2.5); B. Adhiban (2) drew with Aditya Mittal (2); Bharath Subramaniyam (2) bt S.L. Narayanan (1).
Pranav Anand (2) bt Tamas Banusz (1); Raja Rithvik (1) lost to Abhijeet Gupta (2).
Gholami Orimi Mahdi (2) bt S.P. Sethuraman (1); Alisher Suleymenov (0.5) drew with Aditya Samant (0.5).

Verstappen emulates Senna with eight poles in a row

FORMULA ONE

Reuters
IMOLA

Red Bull's Max Verstappen equalled Ayrton Senna's record of eight pole positions in a row with the fastest lap in qualifying for the Emilia Romagna Grand Prix at Imola on Saturday.

The late Brazilian's run was set in 1988/89 with McLaren and Verstappen, also a triple Formula One world champion, started his sequence in Abu Dhabi at the end of last season and has yet to be out-qualified in 2024.

39th career pole

Verstappen's 39th career pole came as Formula One marks 30 years since Senna, who had 65 poles, died in a crash at the Italian circuit on May 1, 1994.

"It's a great start to the year and very special," said the Dutch driver after also matching Alain Prost's record 1993 seven successive poles at the start of a season. "It's 30 years since he (Senna) passed away, so very pleased to get pole and in a way it's a nice memory to him."

On top: Verstappen was fastest in qualifying. GETTY IMAGES

McLaren's Oscar Piastri joined the championship leader provisionally on the front row, with stewards investigating the Australian for possibly impeding Haas's Kevin Magnussen in first phase of qualifying.

Lando Norris, a first time winner at the previous race in Miami, qualified third for McLaren with Ferrari's Charles Leclerc completing second row.

Ferrari's Carlos Sainz qualified fifth, with Mercedes' George Russell sixth and RB's Yuki Tsunoda an impressive seventh for the Faenza-based Red Bull-owned team's home race.

Lewis Hamilton will start eighth for Mercedes and RB's Daniel Ricciardo ninth with Haas's Nico Hulkenberg completing the top 10.

Anirudh-Arjun duo crowned champion

TENNIS

Sports Bureau
NEW DELHI

Top seeds Anirudh Chandrasekar and Arjun Kadhe beat Simon Freund and Johannes Ingildsen 7-5, 6-4 in the doubles final of the €74,825 Challenger tennis tournament in Oeiras, Portugal, on Saturday.

The champions collected €4,250 and 75 ATP points.

It was the 20th career doubles title and seventh Challenger, for the 30-year-old Arjun. It was the ninth doubles title and fourth Challenger for the 25-year-old Anirudh.

The results: €205,000 Challenger, Bordeaux, France: Doubles (quarterfinals): Yuki Bhambri & Albano Olivetti (Fra) bt Theo Arribage (Fra) & Victor Corena (Rou) 6-3, 6-7(5), [10-5].
€74,825 Challenger, Oeiras, Portugal: Doubles (final): Anirudh Chandrasekar & Arjun Kadhe bt Simon Freund (Swe) & Johannes Ingildsen (Den) 7-5, 6-4; Anirudh & Arjun bt Pedro Araujo & Joao Domingues (Por) 6-4, 7-6(6).
$15,000 ITF men, Kingston: Quarterfinals): Aryan Shah bt John Chin (Jam) 3-6, 6-4, 6-1.
$15,000 ITF men, Addis Ababa, Doubles (final): Benjamin Lock & Courtney Lock (Zim) bt Chirag Duhan & Maik Steiner (Ger) 6-3, 7-6(4); Semifinals: Benjamin Lock & Courtney Lock bt SD Prajwal Dev & Adil Kalyanpur 6-4, 6-1.

LIVE TELECAST

IPL: Star Sports 1 S(D & HD) & JioCinema, 3.30 & 7.30 p.m.
Serie A: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & JioCinema, 4, 6.30, 9.30 p.m. & 12.15 a.m. (Monday)
Formula One: Romagna GP, F1 TV, F1 TV Pro App & FanCode, 7.30 p.m.
Premier League: SS Select 1, 2 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 8.30 p.m.
LaLiga: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & JioCinema, 10.30 p.m.
Golf: U.S. PGA Championships: FanCode, 10.30 p.m.